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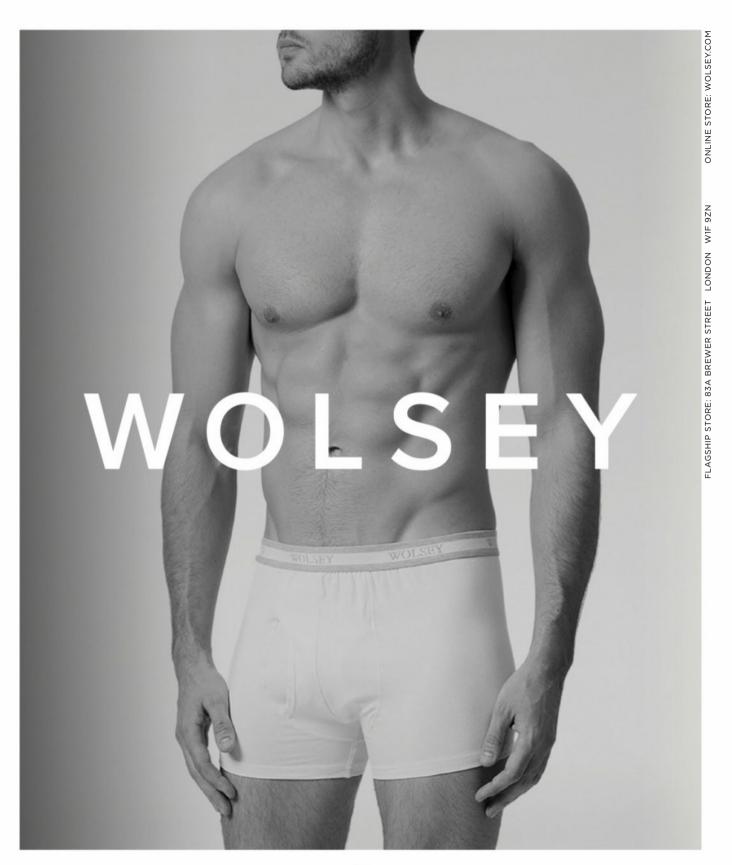
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ALEXANDER MCQUEEN

EDITOR'S SPECIAL

KEEGAN HIRST





By Appointment to Her Majesty The Queen Wolsey Limited Leicoster Manufacturers of Hosiery and Knitwear





I am exceptionally happy to welcome you to the Attitude Awards issue 2015. I'm very pleased that our Awards are now right up there with the Glamour and GQ Men of the Year Awards in the UK's calendar of most high profile events. Events like this don't happen on their own. They take months and months of really hard work. I want to thank all the staff – and especially our managing director Mike Buckley, Gloria Maydew, Cliff Joanouu, Annie Bracken, and our outgoing assistant editor Christian Guiltenane, who work their butts off making this special night and issue happen. I also want to thank our headline sponsors Virgin Holidays who continue to be great and committed friends to *Attitude*. Without them we couldn't make the event happen.

Amongst the awards recognising the people who have shaped the last year, we give several Icon Awards for lifetime or outstanding achievement and this year, the first goes to April Ashley, one of the very first people to have gender reassignment surgery in the UK, in 1960. She lived her truth far before it became more accepted by the world. April endured appalling treatment. She had electro shock therapy as a young man, something that made her eyeballs bleed, and when the tabloids revealed she was born in a male body, she lost her modelling contracts. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to honour this incredibly brave woman and especially proud that, at 80-years-old, she is the oldest person to be on the cover of Attitude and, after Ayla Holdom appeared on this year's Pride Awards cover, the first transgender person to have their own solo Attitude cover.

We're also delighted to honour Holly Johnson, one of our most brilliant singer-songwriters who was out and open and making fantastic music at a time when there was a cultural war against gay people. Holly, we salute you. We're also delighted to honour one of the most iconic women of the 20th century, Yoko Ono. Yoko is one of the world's leading trailblazers as a performance artist and one of the world's most iconic survivors, having faced hatred, racism and misogyny for marrying a Beatle on a huge

scale. She has spoken about LGBT rights many times and ten years ago re-issued her classic song *Every Man Has a Woman Who Loves Him* into *Everyman... Everywoman...*, a song with a marriage equality and pro-LGBT theme way before equal marriage was a high profile issue. We're delighted to include her in this year's awards.

I also want to mention Alexander McQueen. It's five years since Lee McQueen tragically took his own life, something that remains a huge loss to the world. This year has seen books published about him, a West End play and a sell out exhibition at the V&A. We wanted to add our own tribute to McQueen, who was one of the greatest artists of our time, but perhaps more importantly, one of us. We're pleased to honour him with only the second Legend Award we have given at the Attitude Awards so far.

Before I go, I wanted to mention something. I noticed on Twitter recently someone commenting about us 'throwing money' at people to get them on our covers. I want to point out that this is not the case. We do not pay people to appear in or on the cover of Attitude. I joined in 1996 and I have only ever known of one occasion where we paid a celebrity and that was so he could rearrange his day for a shoot for us. Over our 21 years, countless celebrities - from reality stars to the Madonnas, Eltons, Beckhams and Gagas of the world - have appeared in and on the cover of *Attitude* for free because it's the best gay magazine in the world, and because it's the best way to talk to you. It's lucky because we are a small business. We couldn't do this without your support, so please consider subscribing. You can do so on digital or in print and the magazine arrives in an opaque plastic bag that will not out you, if that is a concern. It would make a great Christmas present. Catch you next month.;)

MATTHEW TODD EDITOR

HE UK'S BEST-SELLING GAY MAGAZINE

@ATTITUDEMAG @MRMATTHEWTODD

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Born in London, Ben is a freelance graphic designer. Previous to this he worked as Art Editor for the *Sunday Express*. Experienced in art directing, photoshoots, project managing, he has worked in the industry for almost 10 years. His passion for food landed him the opportunity to work with chef Katherine Frelon – designing and producing her first book, *Shop. Cook. Eat.*



WARREN ALFIE BAKER

Warren is Los Angeles based, British born and raised stylist/on screen fashion expert and Fashion Director. Warren enjoys success dressing celebrities for red carpet events and editorial. He can be seen on numerous TV shows in the US as a Fashion expert. @alfiebakerstyle



PAUL FLYNN

Paul Flynn writes a weekly column for *Grazia* and is a contributing editor at *Love*, *i-D* and *Man About Town*. He interviewed award winners Holly Johnson and Antony Cotton for this issue. "Nothing makes me happier than repping for the North," he says. He is currently writing a book on the cultural milestones that led to British gay equality.



GLORIA MAYDEW

Gloria has worked in PR and events for nearly 15 years, during which time she's met three Prime Ministers and got a kiss from Elton John. She's been working with *Attitude* for three years now, looking after press, and helping to organise our events. This year's awards have been no exception, and she's been hard at work to ensure an array of A-listers make our awards a night to remember.



CHRISTIAN GUILTENANE

After 18 very happy months, Associate Editor Christian bids farewell to Attitude, during which time he edited Love & Marriage and launched groundbreaking digital mag aTEEN. Along the way, he interviewed some of the world's biggest stars including Liam Payne and Sharon Stone, and bows out shooting and interviewing his CBB favourites Austin Armacost and James Hill, plus his tip for the future Baby Daddy star Derek Theler!

attitude

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WHO WOULD YOU GIVE AN AWARD TO AND WHY?













THE WORD ON THE STREET...



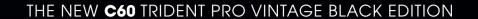










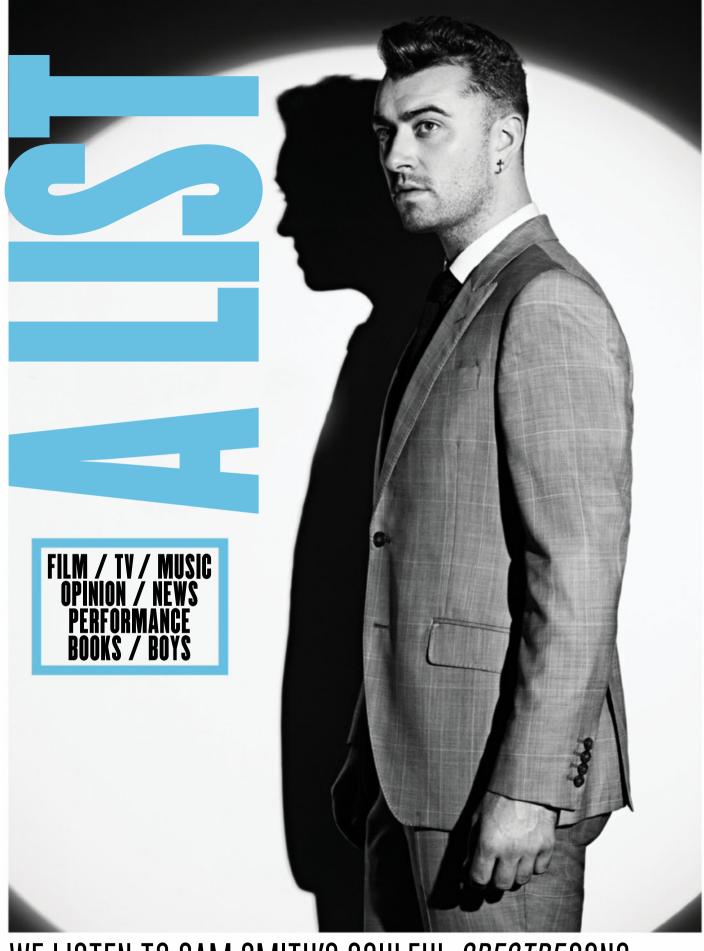


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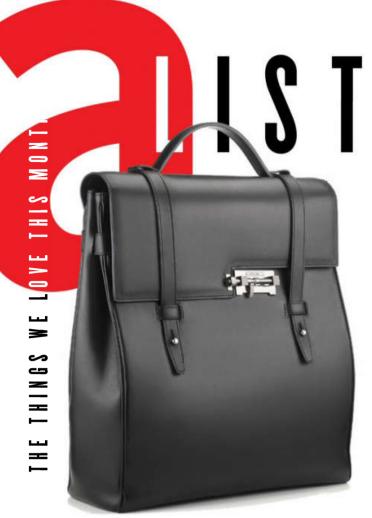


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WE LISTEN TO SAM SMITH'S SOULFUL SPECTRE SONG



↑ FASHION

GLAD BAGS

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↓THEATRE

NEXT LESSON

This play from Chris Woodley is about the infamous Section 28, from its inception in 1988 to present day, through the eyes of a South London school boy.

THE PLEASANCE THEATRE, LONDON, 20-25 OCTOBER. PLEASANCE.CO.UK





←THEATRE

LOVESONG OF THE ELECTRIC RFAR

Following an awardnominated run at the fringe
Hope Theatre, Islington,
this Snoo Wilson play comes
to London's West End. Ian
Hallard gives an outstanding
performance as the gay
mathematician Alan Turing,
in a look back through his life
from his deathbed.
ABOVE THE ARTS THEATRE,
LONDON, 4-21 NOVEMBER.
ARTSTHEATREWESTEND.CO.UK





→ F E S T I V A L S

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GFEST: GAYWISE FESTIVAL

Now in its 8th year, this multi-discipline arts festival runs at various venues across London for two weeks in November, showcasing LGBTQI art, film and performance. Highlights include filmmaker Michael J Saul whose gay feature The Surface opens the festival, and renowned artist, writer and gay activist Sunil Gupta, who boldly portrays gay life in his native India.

THE ACROSS LONDON, 9-20 NOVEMBER. GAYWISEFESTIVAL.ORG.UK





SOAK

BRIDIE MONDS-WATSON - BETTER KNOWN BY HER STAGE NAME SOAK - IS A SINGER-SONGWRITER FROM DERRY. HER DEBUT ALBUM, BEFORE WE FORGOT HOW TO DREAM, WAS RELEASED EARLIER THIS YEAR TO CRITICAL ACCLAIM.

Wby the name SOAK?

Well, it comes as a combination of the genres soul and folk, which I don't think the music is at all. People read into it but it's just a name.

What would you describe your music as then?

It's been described as dream pop that's kind of the indie genre that it would tie into. But the things I'm writing now don't fall into that category. I think it's important not to limit your sound to one genre.

How bas touring been?

Intense! It's been a lot of work and we've been doing a lot of shows. I've been touring for about three years now, from Europe to the States to Australia. It's great getting to see all the new places, but I love coming home to Derry and spending time with my family and friends.

What about London? You spend some time flitting between bere and Derry...

I haven't been here in months, but London is one of my favourite places to walk around, especially in winter. It's very picturesque. I couldn't live here though. I'd hate it. It's just too expensive.

What do you think of the music climate today?

I feel like nothing really big has happened in music for a while. I haven't heard anything new that I've liked in ages. There's a lot of stuff being churned out but they all tend to blur; none really stand out for me. It seems more concerned about drama than the music.

What about Spotify?

SPOTIFY IS **DEFINITELY** WHERE MUSIC IS HEADED. I DON'T HEAR ANYONE SAYING 'OH, LET'S BUY THAT CD' **ANYMORE**

BEFORE WE FORGOT

HOW TO DREAM

IS OUT NOW

I mean my album is on it, so I'm not sure I can turn around and criticise it. They do need to rethink a more substantial payment method than the current one [La Roux reportedly earned only £100 for the last quarter from the streaming service]. But what I do like about it is, for me at least, if there's a song I've heard I'll give the artist a listen on Spotify. If I really like their work I'll go and buy it then off iTunes. But it's definitely where music is headed. I don't hear anyone saying 'oh, let's buy that CD' anymore.

Female sexuality and feminism bas become a buge topic in music too.

Well, you look at the abuse female artists receive online and it's not hard to see why. It's not OK. I'm friends with Lauren Mayberry [Chvrches], and she wrote a really great piece in The Guardian about online misogyny. There are more and more people willing to take a stand against it now. It's because of things like Twitter that people are more vocal, but you know

they'd never say these things to your face. I get those kinds of comments sometimes. For me, I think there should be more emphasis placed on banning people who write abusive comments on social media. Look at what that asshole Katie Hopkins gets away with saying.

You're also a spokesperson for samesex marriage in Northern Ireland. What did you make of the recent success in the Republic?

It's incredible. It was a great moment for Irish history. But now the pressure's on Northern Ireland to follow suit. Between Ireland and the UK, it's the only place without gay marriage. It's ridiculous. I just fear that it's going be a while before it's legalised where I'm from.

What's next for you?

I'm still touring until mid-January of next year. But I'm constantly writing, so once I get more downtime I'm back into the studio to work on new music. www.soakmusic.com



WORDS: KEVIN LONG





←FASHION

WOLSEY'S 260TH Anniversary.

Wolsey is celebrating being one of the oldest clothing brands in the world, at the ripe old age of 260.

They have created a Made in GB capsule collection comprising of three iconic coat options – the pea coat, the overcoat and the parka – as well as flap caps, scarf, a wool baseball cap, a sweater and beanie bat to keep you covered up from the cold.

AVAILABLE FROM SEPTEMBER. WOLSEY.COM





A LIST MUSIC REVIEWS

WORDS: BEN KELLY & KEVIN LONG



MARKUS FEEHILY
FIRE/HARMONEY ENTERTAINMENT



Markus Feehily was the soulful voice who took many a Westlife song to the bridge, and like a fine wine, he has only improved with age. After a few years out of the spotlight, he has emerged with a surprisingly strong collection of serious pop songs, with an urban influenced sound far more credible than one would expect from a former boybander. The lyrics and music convey a turbulence, surely reflective of Feehily's troubled years struggling with his sexuality. Love Is A Drug, Wash The Pain Away and Butterfly are show stoppers while piano ballad Back To Yours is fragile and tender. Frank and refreshing, this is a big 2.0 moment for Mr Feehily. BK



JOHN NEWMAN

8/10

REVOLVE/ISLAND

Back with album number two, and John Newman serves up another dose of Northern soul, with a touch of American sheen to it. Following on the back of his Calvin Harris collaboration *Blame* and his hit *Come and Get It* (both on here), *Revolve* is a back-to-back run of high energy, retro sounding tunes made for finger clicking and shuffling in shiny shoes. He lets up for piano ballads *I'm Not Your Man* and *The Past*, but his gruff vocals are better suited to belting out with the full band in tracks like *All My Heart* and *Lights Down*. There's a chance it's all a little samey, but at worst it's only too much of a good thing. **BK**



MIKKY EKKO

TIME/COLUMBIA

7/10

You probably remember Mikky Ekko from his 2013 Rihanna collaboration *Stay*. Now, the U.S. indie pop man is releasing his debut album, and cuts a credible role for himself on the music landscape. Like an alternative Justin Timberlake effort, *Time* is full of well written pop tunes like *Watch Me Rise* and *Love You Crazy* with light, high pitched vocals running through them. The production takes root in acoustic guitar and drums, with just a smattering of electronic on top. Contributors include producer Benny Blanco and one man hit factory Ryan Tedder, so you best believe Ekko and his supporters mean business. **BK**



SAM SMITH: WRITING'S ON THE WALL

In Numbers

It's been 50 years since a British solo male recorded the Bond song. The last one was Tom Jones Thunderball in 1965.

Writing's On The Wall is the 6th theme song which hasn't taken its title from the film. Other 'difficult' titles which the singers avoided include Quantum of Solace and Octopussy...

IT'S THE FIRST TIME A GAY ARTIST HAS RECORDED THE BOND THEME.

The amount of minutes Sam claims it took bim to write the track.

Only one artist was younger than 23-year-old Sam when they recorded the Bond theme: Sheena Easton, who sang For Your Eyes Only when she was 22.

• SPECTRE IS RELEASED IN THE UK ON 26 OCTOBER, FOLLOWED BY A GLOBAL RELEASE ON 6 NOVEMBER.

SOUNDTRACK OF MY LIFE: SHANE FILAN

After selling over 44
million records as part
of one of the world's
biggest boybands,
Westlife, Shane Filan
returns with his
sophomore solo album
Right Here, which features

current single *Me and the Moon* and a duet with Girls Aloud's Nadine Coyle.

The first song you ever bought:

Funnily enough, the first song I remember buying is *Uptown Girl* when I was four. I can still remember seeing the video on TV. *The song that reminds you of falling in love:* R. Kelly's *I Believe I Can Fly* was popular around the time myself and my wife Gillian

first started getting together. I remember hearing it and wanting to dance with her in the discos back in the day. But it was KC and JoJo's *All My Life* that I fell in love to.

The song that played during your first dance at your wedding:

(*I've Had*) The Time of My Life. You have that moment for the two of you at the beginning when it starts off, but by the chorus everyone's out dancing.

The song that always makes you cry:

Oh, I can't really think of one that always makes me cry. The last one I remember crying to – and this sounds a bit corny – was the band recording Lonestar's *I'm Already There* in the studio. It was years ago now, but I remember breaking down in the booth

because I missed my daughter Nicole, who had been born at that time.

Your favourite song by a gay artist:

Probably Sam Smith's *I'm Not the Only One*. I think that's his best song.

The album that changed your life:

Without a doubt it's MJ's *Bad* album. That changed my life. From that moment on I knew I wanted to be a singer.

The song you wish you'd written:

Probably the Bryan Adam's song, (Everything I Do) I Do it For You. It's right up there with the best of the love ballads. KL Shane Filan's new album Right Here is out now.



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A LIST_FILM REVIEWS WORDS: JOE PASSMORE



4/5

SUFFRAGETTE

CAREY MULLIGAN, HELENA BONHAM CARTER, BEN WHISHAW

Carey Mulligan takes the lead in this important piece of feminist history as Maud Watts, a Bethnal Green laundry worker, Arriving early for awards season, Suffragette is everything you'd expect from a retelling of the treatment of those who were imprisoned, force-fed and beaten because of their desperate bid for equality. Director Sarah Gavron's retelling of the events is aptly sickening and touching in part. But the story is too brief in its pace for its characters to leave a lasting effect. With strong performances, authentic cinematography and a very brief cameo from Meryl Streep, Suffragette still has a chance of success at next year's Academy Awards. Out 12th October

KITANA KIKI RODRIGUEZ, MYA TAYLOR, JAMES RANSONE Straight out of prison, trans sex worker Sin-Dee Rella (Rodriguez) takes to the streets of Hollywood with her best friend Alexandra (Taylor) in search of her good-for-nothing pimp boyfriend, who's been cheating on her. From the start, Tangerine attacks with foul language, sexual objectification and threats of violence. It does have something much grander to say under the aggressive exterior. Filmed solely using iPhone technology, writer and director Sean Baker's magnificent creation is intimate and mesmerising viewing, which is packed with side splitting dialogue, fast paced drama and unexpected poignancy. Out 13th November



Still would

4/5

KILL YOUR FRIENDS

NICOLAS HOULT, JAMES CORDEN, CRAIG ROBERTS

Based on the 2008 cult novel by industry cynic John Niven, Owen Harris' feature length adaptation is led by Steven Stelfox (Hoult) an A&R man at a extravagant London record company trying to sign the latest artists and climb his way to the top of the career ladder by any means possible. This black comedy is sillier and more ridiculous than it's trying to be. but if you're a fan of music, it's difficult not to overlook the often clunky dialogue and appreciate this for its nuance in connection to 90s Britpop. It's an inferior version of American Psycho, but Kill Your Friends is still full of interesting twists and turns to work. Out 6th November



5/5

RROOKI YN

SAOIRSE RONAN, EMORY COHEN, JULIE WALTERS

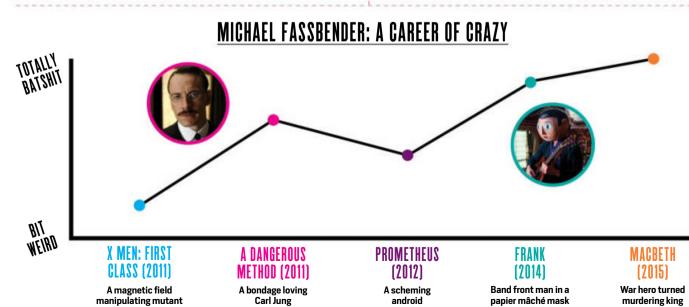
Lured by the promise of America, Eilis Lacey (Ronan) leaves her life and family behind in Ireland. She soon shakes off her initial homesickness, confusion and feelings of inadequacy as romance sweeps her up by the hands of handsome Italian-American plumber Tony (Cohen). However, after serious family news forces Eilis home. she's faced with a difficult decision. Brooklyn is an eloquently shot moving drama, boasting a genuine sense of place. Ronan anchors the film with a magnetic performance as she intertwines important melodies of belonging, family and home. Out 6th November

papier mâché mask

Only with the mask on

murdering king

Yeah, go on then



android

Is this had?

Carl Jung

Still would

LITTLE MIX

Officially the new Girls Aloud, who were officially the new Spice Girls, who were officially the new Bananarama, who were officially the new Supremes. Maybe.

So there. And Destiny's Child.

STRICTLY

Oh, the good old days. When men were men and women were women. LOL YES LOOOOOOOL.

Craig purses lips and sneers

HALLOWEEN

Gay Christmas! When men were men and women were women. And everybody wore a hat. *Craig purses lips*

THE GLORY

The best gay pub in the country.

ANTHONY OGOGO

10. *Craig touches self*

JAMIE LEE CURTIS

Queen. *Craig purses lips* 'Divine, darling'

'DISASTER/DIVINE DARLING'

Craig purses lips



THE MUPPETS

Hmm. We're not sure about this clever post modern thing. Hmm. Yes, Hmm.

GIFS AND MEMES AND FUKKIN SHIT

Oh, we're so ABOVE EVERYTHING! Why don't we just stop talking altogether biatches? We're here for that. *gif of camp girl rolling her eyes and raising champagne glass*

TWO MONTHS MORE TILL STAR WHORES

We're sick of waiting.
We want Leia to have become a lesbian
activist and R2D2 a radical faery

KIM DAVIS

She's hanging with the Pope, she's makin' speeches to the *Rocky* soundtrack (why not?) WHAT IS GOING ON IN THIS FRIKKIN WORLD. SOMEBODY SLAP OUR FACES AND WAKE US UP

HALLOWEEN'S OVER FOR ANOTHER YEAR

We love it. We love the artifice, the magic, the fear, seeing staight boys getting as queer as they get by dressing up as Scooby Doo. *Craig purses lips*

Joe Stone

twitter @Joe_Stone_



IS BEING GAY ABOUT TO BECOME MAINSTREAM?

In the immortal words of my father (on hearing that a friend's son had also come out) 'there's a lot of it about these days, isn't there?' At the time his remark felt so regressive that I practically had an out of body experience hearing it. Now I think, well, yeah. Because, while being gay is hardly the new-fangled trend that his logic seemed to imply, there can be little doubting that sexual fluidity is on the up. A YouGov poll earlier this year found that just under half (46%) of 18-to-24-year-old Brits consider themselves completely straight, while only 6% identified as exclusively gay. In case your maths is as bad as my geography, that leaves 52% somewhere in between.

Back then my dad was no doubt guilty of confusing the existence of gav people with their visibility (there definitely were gay people in his day, they were probably just less likely to sign-post their sexuality with official Lady Gaga tour t-shirts). Today, it seems likely that high profile 'somewhere in between' celebrities are helping to break down the gay-straight binary. Not to play into the bigoted view that queer people proselytise, and that to witness gayness is to be turned, but reading Cara Delevingne talking about her girlfriend, or Tom Daley refusing to be defined one way or the other has to help normalise samesex attraction. Rather than passing on their queerness, like chicken pox, it seems more likely that these celebrities have helped to make others with same-sex inclinations feel secure enough to be themselves, which is a good thing. Unless you belong to the Christian far right, have helmet hair and are called Pam

- in which case, soz hun.

Increasingly, it seems that gay and straight cultures are merging. For



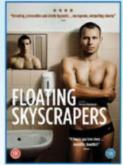
IF BEING
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proof, look no further than your Aunty Joy, who can't get enough of Drag Race (every other word is 'gurl'), or the fact that so many queer-ish club nights are attracting a mixed crowd. Everywhere you turn, gay people are acting like straight people - getting married, having kids - some of us are even wearing those shoes that look like pasties. Meanwhile, straight women can't get enough of hook-up apps, and straight men are busy giving each other 'bro jobs' (for more on this, read Dr Jane Ward's book Not Gay: Sex Between Straight White Men, and feel livid that this wasn't yet a thing when you were at school).

If gay is gone mainstream, then in many ways that's positive. The public perception of gay as the new normal has ensured many of the rights that have only recently been won - like equal marriage. But integration has less welcome consequences too. This can be felt in London, where so many gay venues have closed this year. Obviously, commercial concerns play a huge part, but it's also true that as gay people have felt more comfortable in straight or mixed venues, there's less perceived demand for 'gay only' pubs and clubs. Besides, who needs to go out and meet people when you can hook up on your phone?

Except being gay has always been about more than who you sleep with. Some of the greatest contributions to culture have been born from feeling that 'otherness' which we're at risk of losing. If young people don't feel the need to be defined by their sexuality then that's great, but there's also power in identity – something that is worth remembering when being gay is still illegal in 70 odd countries. There may be 'a lot of it about' but there's still progress to be made.















TOP TV this month

TERRESTRIAL: CUFFS

This brand new cop show follows a

Brighton beat, notably with the handsome Jacob Ifan playing gay PC Jake Vickers. It launches at the end of October on BBC One.



- CABLE: AMERICAN HORROR STORY: HOTEL

We love AHS at the best of times, but could we BE any more excited that Lady Gaga is coming on board as the femme fatale? Starring as The Countess, she'll be playing alongside all the regulars (minus Jessica Lange) in a modern day L.A. hotel, haunted by the spectre of mid century killing sprees. We will definitely be checking in when it hits FOX UK on 20 October.



- ONLINE: JESSICA JONES

One of four live action Marvel superhero adaptations coming to Netflix, *Jessica Jones* stars Krysten Ritter as a former superhero who opens her own detective agency, dealing with people who have remarkable abilities in New York City.

Also starring David Tennant, it premieres on the platform globally with 13 episodes on 20 November.



BOX SET: MAD MEN

Yes, it's dreadfully sad that *Mad Men* is over forever, but look on the bright side, you finally get to own the Complete

Season 1-7 Deluxe Collector's Box Set! Exclusive to Amazon. co.uk it'll cost a whopping £139.99 when released on 2 November.



Jemal Polson

twitter @FemalPolson

ARE WE TOO CASUAL WITH BESTOWING THE WORD 'HERO' UPON PEOPLE?

I'VE BEEN THINKING about the word 'heroes' a lot recently. Not in the sense of a gallant or valiant individual riding up on their white horse to save the day – more in line with those who many idolise and whose works they consider influential and hold in higher esteem than anyone else. Honestly, it's a word that I hardly ever hear, and it's not a term I ever tend to think of all that much.

When listing the LGBT personalities many are influenced by, it's easy to jump to some of the most prominent figures within the entertainment industry. I wouldn't call them my 'heroes' per se, but I love the works of Michael Moore, Lee Daniels, Kanye West and Joss Whedon. Straight talking musicians and entertainers such as Sir Elton John and Lady Gaga, as well as the near omnipotent Stephen Fry, tend to spring to mind for many. It's easy for me to see why these three individuals are so widely adored. They've fought tirelessly to get to their points of prominence, and have used their status to raise awareness of a number of LGBT issues. John's nonprofit organisation, the Elton John AIDS Foundation has reportedly raised over \$200,000,000 since its inception in 1992. In addition to serving as the president of Mind, Fry has supported numerous gay rights causes. Gaga helped raise awareness calling for the dismissal of the US Army's Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy and also has her own non-profit organisation, the Born This Way Foundation.

I do believe these figures are more than worthy of the praise they receive. But I also believe it's incredibly important to look at the great scientists, mathematicians, and non-celebrity activists, philanthropists, protesters, et al, both



IT'S ALSO
INCREDIBLY
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TO LOOK AT
THE GREAT
SCIENTISTS,
MATHEMATICIANS
AND NONCELEBRITY
ACTIVISTS THAT
HAVE HELPED US
GET TO WHERE
WE ARE TODAY

past and present that have helped us get to where we are today. Many of which, whose lives have been lost fighting for our equal rights.

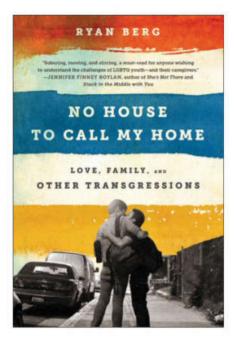
The names of many Stonewall activists - such as Marsha P. Johnson, Sylvia Rivera and Stormé DeLavarie - who devoted their lives to LGBT causes are names that aren't spoken half as much as they should be. Alan Turing, the World War II code breaker was a name largely unheard of until he graced the cover of Attitude for their 2013 Awards edition. Arsham Parsi, founder of the Iranian Railroad for Queer Refugees, and David Kato - described as 'Uganda's first openly gay man' (who was murdered in 2011) should be on all of our minds. These names are barely the tip of the iceberg.

We've barely touched upon the great things that many gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people have achieved throughout history. Could the reason be due to the fact that the sexuality of many influential historical figures has been overlooked by history? And when those plights are brought to literature, stage and screen, they sometimes happen to be inaccurate portrayals of what really happened? (I'm looking at you, Roland Emmerich).

It's important that we celebrate the achievements of the LGBT people who are responsible for how things have come to be in 2015. I include myself in this.

I'm not saying that it has to mean forgetting about the Lady Gagas and Stephen Frys of the world. They're doing tremendous work. I just think Turing, Parsi, Kato and others should share as equal a platform as the musicians, actors, actresses and singers who are so widely adored for their movements within the LGBT community.

A LIST_BOOKS WORDS: BEN KELLY



NO HOUSE TO CALL MY HOME

RYAN BERG/NATION BOOKS

By his own admission Ryan Berg was lost in his own life when he took up a job as a caseworker in a group home for disowned LGBTQ teenagers in New York City in 2004, but the problems he saw reflected back at him far outweighed his own. *No House to Call My Home* is both a memoir of his years in the role, and a lyrical ode to the lives of these tragic youths, who struggle to break the destructive cycles and systems into which they have been born.

As a gay white man from the Midwest, Berg's disclaimer is that he is not attempting to "save or speak for young queer people of colour," but rather to showcase their bravery, and shine a spotlight on how the U.S. care system fails so many of its most vulnerable youths (of the 4,000 homeless youths in New York City, almost 43% are LGBTQ). And

indeed this book is theirs, rather than Berg's. It is written as a collection of short stories, through most of which Berg is merely an observer similar to Isherwood's *Berlin Novels*.

It is the youths themselves who are the characters, and the essence of this book, making it hard not to be both engaged and concerned by kids like Benny, an HIV orphan who Berg tries to wean off gay chat lines and dangerous hook ups, or Christina, a transgender girl who rejects Berg's attempts to get her into education, in favour of seeking a temporary sense of being desired through prostitution. Through self harm, drug taking, sexual abuse and depressingly old fashioned queer bashing, *No House to Call My Home* is a sobering reminder of the pitfalls that can befall queer young on top of the already devastating condition of abandonment and homelessness.



BINGE

Tyler Oakley/Simon & Schuster

As if garnering 500 million YouTube views and an army of global social media followers wasn't enough, Tyler Oakley – a 26-year-old, one man pop culture phenomenon based in Los Angeles – is now branching out into writing, with his first book <code>Binge</code>.

A series of autobiographical essays, interspersed with bitty lists and funny commentaries that wouldn't look out of place in this very magazine, *Binge* sits somewhere between the comic realism of David Sedaris, and the 'all my thoughts pinned on a cork board' style we enjoyed from Amy Poehler's *Yes Please*.

At nearly 300 pages, *Binge* is thorough, extensive, and not just a soulless product attached to an over exposed brand. Although not exactly literary, Oakley holds his patch well, and maintains the tone and candour of his instantly accessible YouTube clips – in some instances, revealing himself even further, notably in a slightly harrowing scene depicting an

abusive relationship. It's unsurprising really, as stars like Oakley thrive in an environment where they share absolutely everything with their eager audience, and it really is all in here.

Alongside an extensive analysis of his first big love is a rundown of his top twelve Disney princes, his coming out troubles are revealed in full (including an intolerant religious father), and he details his onscreen interview with Michelle Obama in typical fangirl style. The fact that it was her who asked him to do the interview demonstrates the kind of sway he and his peers hold in today's world. And, for such a prominent gay figure (he has raised over \$1 million for The Trevor Project) one cannot understate the soft power Oakley has to change hearts and minds around the world on LGBT issues, and to reach out to isolated youths, whatever his chosen format.

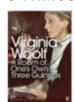


ROBOT TAKEOVER

ANA MATRONIC/OCTOPUS

Yes, that Ana Matronic! The lady of the Scissor Sisters and friend of Attitude, Ana has been tasked with taking her lifelong love of all things robotic and creating this run down of the '100 Most Iconic Robots of All Time', as the book is subtitled. It's divided into two halves; one of robots imagined - from cartoons like The 7etsons to films from Metropolis. Star Wars and Robocop - and one of robots realised - which looks at innovations from the 11th century, to Honda's running man Asimo, up to the incredible Mars Rovers. With a double page on each robot, this will provide hours of facts and fun for technology lovers of all ages.

3 FAMOUS LGBT ESSAYS



VIRGINIA WOOLF: A room of one's own

The sexually ambiguous Woolf used this feminist essay to critique patriarchy by imagining 'Shakespeare's sister' as

a woman with her brother's skills, but no social standing.



SUSAN SONTAG: NOTES ON CAMP The celebrated intellectual didn't identify the 'camp'

identify the 'camp' sensibility, but she did do a remarkable job of defining it in this

landmark essay, where she explored it across 58 detailed points.



DAVID SEDARIS: NAKED

Naked is a series of essays chronicling Sedaris' life; including battling OCD and Tourettes, his emerging homosexuality as a

teen in Greece and his curious gap year picking apples in Oregon.



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JACK MATTHEWS





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▲ THIS MONTH:

JAMES CREATED A NEW LINE OF T-SHIRTS, REMIXED THE UNRELEASED RIHANNA ALBUM (IRONICALLY), WROTE A SCRIPT ABOUT THE LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S FICTIONAL GAY LOVER, DEBATED THE CONSTRAINTS OF GENDER AT AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN ARKANSAS, OPENED A RESTAURANT THEMED ON TRADITIONAL PERSIAN CUISINE, AND CALLED HIS MUM. GO JAMES!

AFTER RYAN ADAMS

COVERED TAYLOR'S 1989

IN ITS ENTIRETY...

<u>COVER ALBUMS WE</u> WANT TO HEAR NEXT



NADINE COYLE OVER-SINGING

THE HITS OF CHERYL COLE

STEPTACULAR BY STEPS, REIMAGINED BY KANYE WEST

LITTLE JACK
HORNY: MILEY
CYRUS SEXES
UP THE CLASSIC
NURSERY RHYMES



MKS COVER SWEET 7 BY IMPOSTER SUGABABES

MADONNA DOING AN AVICII VERSION OF REBEL HEART

Paris

IS BURNING

YOU'LL BE AS SELFISH AS ME IF YOU HAVE ANY SENSE

I WANT IT ALL – and I'm not ashamed to say so. Call me selfish if you like, but I'll never apologise for having ambition. Where I come from we weren't taught to expect much from life other than a job in a pub or being able to buy your own council house. Maybe you hoped to marry and have kids, but if you were gay or trans you didn't even think those were on offer. Your biggest concern was hoping to land a job without fear of judgement.

So, what do you do in a world that says you're not entitled to anything? If you have any sense, you become selfish. You develop coping strategies. You have to. 'Fuck you', you say. I'm not going to be who you want me to be. You become headstrong. You learn to fight. You say 'this is me'. More often than not, you have to drag everyone else along kicking and screaming. It is the only way they will accept you and even then, you may find that the very people who are supposed to love and support you don't.

In a cruel, prejudiced and discriminatory society, that which should be considered a vice becomes a virtue. Thank God I was selfish. Thank God I put my own interests first for so long. Do you have any idea where I would be if I hadn't?

I know two trans people from my hometown. One of them earns her living by having sex for money. That's nothing to be ashamed of – and I've done it myself – but how long will that last for? The other dare not come out as trans. She works in a factory and is too scared to tell her family who she really is. She drinks too much. She's depressed. She calls me sometimes to tell me she's suicidal.

These days begging has

become mainstream. 'Visit my Kickstarter!' 'Fund my film!' 'Give me money!' In my view, if an idea is good, someone somewhere will commission and fund it. You don't need to ask your friends to bankroll you. And I can't help but cringe when I see people in public life ask their fans to vote for them if they happen to be nominated for some award. I don't think it's something I'd ever do, although those words may well come back to haunt me. When I look at the life of someone like April Ashley, whom Attitude is quite rightly celebrating as an icon this month, I'm ready to hold my head high as a shameless self-promoter. When April was outed as trans in the 1960s she lost all her contracts and never worked in film or fashion again. Sadly, in a bigoted society, this is what happens when other people decide what you do or do not deserve

I was at an event recently and a photographer asked me to come over to the media board and have my photo taken. I rounded up all the other trans people in the room and brought them with me. (I'm not completely selfish!) Some felt uncomfortable. 'Are you sure they'll want a photo of me?' they asked. I said 'get in front of that bloody camera, smile, pose and don't ever feel ashamed to promote yourself'. No one is handing it out on plates to people like us. When gay and trans people are properly represented in government, the media and all areas of our society, maybe I'll start judging people again for self-promotion. Until that day, keep flying your own (rainbow) flags. No one else is going to do it

for you.



TrulyMadlyDeeply 11121

VINCE, 44, RETAIL CONSULTANT

We met on Charing Cross Road, on the way to Heaven back in 1997, when I was just leaving the RAF. We were both skinny in those days – 28" waists! He was working for an airline at the time and about three weeks later he said, "Do you wanna come on a free holiday?" I thought, 'Oh, well, I'll give it a go.' And then I moved in with him about a month after that. We've been having a ball ever since.

We moved around the country with Adrian's job, and when we were in Bristol we worked together on a voluntary basis as first responders. So, when you dialled 999, we'd rock up with our paramedic bag and all our airline training, which we did for about 4 years, at all hours of the night. We're a bit too old for it now, I reckon.

We don't want kids; we're too selfish! We've got two nephews who we adore but it's fabulous to just hand them back to their mother. We're in the really lucky position that after a long time of working hard we've got some decent money to go out and do stuff we've always wanted to do. We paid about £20,000 to go round the world first class for our honeymoon, and it was just amazing. We've always said that if next week we haven't got any money, we wouldn't give a shit. We'd just start again.

ADRIAN, 44, BUSINESS MANAGER

We got our Civil Partnership in 2013. It wasn't really a case of *if* we were going to do it, but *when* we were going to do it. We knew we wanted it to be airline themed, so we hired Concorde at Manchester Airport to get married on board the aircraft. We had 38 guests and we started off in our local restaurant in the village with a champagne reception. Then we had a vintage bus that took everyone to the Concorde. We kept it as authentic as we could: everybody had boarding passes, we had current BA crew there in uniform doing all the checking in. We even did a comical version of the emergency demonstration. Our rings came down the aisle on top of a bar cart pushed by the cabin crew.

We wanted the dinner afterwards to be as far from a wedding reception as possible, so we didn't have a top table. Instead, we had a spare place at every table so we'd move round and have a course at each. We didn't have dinner together, but that was the day we wanted.

We work hard every day and, come the weekend, we play hard as well. Vince is temperamental. He's a bit like Marmite really: people either love him or hate him. But we just get on and we just have it all, he's my best friend as well as everything else.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO BE CONSIDERED FOR TRULY MADLY DEEPLY EMAIL A SELECTION OF PHOTOS AND A FEW WORDS TO BEN.KELLY@ATTITUDE.CO.UK

SEVENTY THIRTY

"You don't love someone for their looks, or their clothes, or for their fancy car, but because they sing a song only you can hear."

O. Wilde



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Table for Two

JAMES DICKINSON AND DAREN PRITCHARD ENJOY A DATE AT LE RESTAURANT DE PAUL, TOWER 42



FIRST IMPRESSIONS?

- J: As I walked over to the table my first impression was that Daren was a handsome man. When we were introduced we both immediately went in for a hug and he shot me a great smile, so I got the vibe he was a decent guy and we were going to have a good time. I wasn't wrong.
- D: I thought he was good-looking and friendly, if younger than I was expecting.

 AWKWARD MOMENTS?
- J: None, actually. I was really nervous that there were going to be a few. But we shared a lot of the same interests and Daren does performance art, so I had a great time asking him all about that. We laughed about the nightmare scenarios we had both envisaged before that date about what the other person would be like, but thankfully none of those came true.

D: My attempt at pronouncing the French cuisine! Otherwise, only at the start to get conversation flowing after we first met, but it didn't take that long. As a vegetarian I was expecting choosing a share to begin with to be a bit awkward, but he was more than happy to go with the veggie platter.

HOW WAS THE FOOD?

I: The food was fantastic; I have always wanted to check out PAUL because I love the cafe. We shared a vegetarian platter to start with and then I had scallops which were followed by sole in a mussel sauce. It was incredible; I had to fight the urge to lick the plate clean. After this I had meringue with crème anglaise. All of this was washed down with a fair amount of champagne! It was great and our waitress Kingah gave us brilliant service, so I will be going back soon. D: The food was great. We had a bread basket to begin, and a delicious vegetarian platter. All the bread is made there and there were these soft Emmental rolls which were great. I chose the tomato tart with a side of ratatouille for my main. I absolutely

SNOG, MARRY OR AVOID?

- J: Definitely snog! He's a cutie.
- D: Snog for sure.

loved it.

WOULD YOUR MOTHER LIKE HIM?

- J: Yes, she would, without a doubt.
- D: I think so. He's a friendly guy who loves a drink!

SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN?

- J: I would like to see him again, even as friends. I had a great time!
- D: I think so. We're quite similar so I think there's potential for friendship.









DATE RATING OUT OF TEN



7/10

8/10

WORDS: CHRISTIAN GUILTENANE

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an Diego based brand Rufskin have a new set of denim style for autumn/winter. They have re-engineered their Maverick jeans, improving the fit and adding colours and various washes; The Matchstick has a new classic rinsed indigo denim; their Hendrix line has a heavier wash and a great fade to the denim; and the Cobra styles have a soft satin-like twill fabric that comes in a sumptuous dark burgundy. The website houses a huge scope of great denim, including jeans, jackets and more. You can simply look up the style and check out your options. Founded in 2002 as a denim brand, they have

Founded in 2002 as a denim brand, they have since branched out into athletic wear, swimwear and underwear, as well as leather clothes and accessories. While denim is still at the heart of Rufskin, there is plenty to look at on their website, including their online magazine *Rufhouse*, where the founders Douglas Coats and Hubert Pouches photograph the latest Rufskin products at beautiful locations in and around California. *Rufskin.com*

Photography: Leonardo Corredor Fashion & Words: Joseph Kocharian

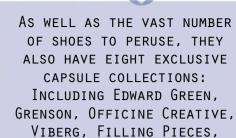


TROLLEY DASH

MR PORTER 'THE WORLD'S BEST SHOES'

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EDIT & WORDS: JOSEPH KOCHARIAN

MR PORTER HAVE A STRONG EDITORIAL PRESENCE, SO THE WORLD'S BEST SHOES WILL BE FEATURED IN ISSUES OF THE JOURNAL AND THE MR PORTER POST, WHICH WILL INCLUDE VIDEOS AND FASHION STORIES ABOUT THE SHOES.



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With every new range, Acqua Di Parma takes us on a fully realised journey with their products. Meticulous and conscientious in their process, every detail is fine tuned to perfection. Their new range Acqua time they are taking us to the private members club which has experienced a renaissance over the past top notes of lemon, petitgrain, bergamot, mandarin, towards the man who likes conversation, travel and country house retreat with open fireplaces, leather the eau de cologne, hair and shower gel and scented

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID MARQUEZ / EDIT & WORDS BY JOSEPH KOCHARIAN / ASSISTED BY NICK BYAM

THE GRAND HOTEL SPA

WORDS: NICK BYAM



he Spa at The Grand Hotel on Brighton's seafront, relaunched in 2013 after a fantastic refurbishment, now offers a wide range of treatments using products supplied by The Natural Spa Factory. The 'Gold Champagne Facial' had our name all over it- Using skin loving ingredients combining pearl and caviar with champagne extractm it's defitintly a treat for those who enjoy the finer things in life. It will leave your skin glowing and that smelling enough to eat.

The spa itself has captured the essence decadence and contemporary interior. Located on the basement floor, the spa facilities include a steam room and sauna and a relaxation lounge with an incredibly huge and comfortable double bed- it's opulent whilst maintining great prices for treatments.



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This highly concentrated Renew and Illuminate Super Serum definitely packs a punch. It's ideal for use after shaving and a little goes a long way. Use in the areas in most need of attention to help even out skin tone, lighten age spots and reduce skin discolouration.

The rice grain has traditionally been considered a source of beauty in Asia and is used to leave skin complexion whiter and smoother. Its richness in oryzanol, vitamins and minerals gives the softening, moisturising and toning effects.



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LIME AND LEMON GRASS SCRUB £20.00

A good body scrub is the main stay of any bathroom. An easy, natural way to remove dry and flaky skin, smooth dimples and leave skin feeling softer and altogether less dirty. Infused with the finest and refreshing fragrances and an abundance of soothing carrier oils, your skin will be fully quenched and fresh, so no need for added body moisturising.

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find and the scent of cocoa flower, it makes for a perfect relaxing experience having warm oil pored over the body ready for a deep massage.



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PIERRE MARCOLINI X TOM DIXON

Maison Pierre Marcolini transcends our expectations of a chocolatier. A fan of collaborating with fellow artists, Marcolini's creations made with the 'art of Haute Chocolaterie' are always boxed in something special. The brand's current collaboration is with British designer Tom Dixon. The pink, orange, yellow and purple sides form a multi-coloured brick with 'LONDON' stamped in a bold font that are a nod to Dixon's fascination with

LONDON

building blocks. Housed inside are 36 chocolates Pierre has made alongside top Michelin-starred chefs. The chocolates included are blackcurrant, lemon praline, orange blossom and

> Coeur framboise to name but a few. If your palette is craving something other than chocolate, you can get an assortment of 12 macaroons, pictured here.

AVAILABLE AT MAISON PIERRE MARCOLINI, 37 MARYLEBONE HIGH STREET, LONDON



e've got a travel crush that's imbued with style this month, and we're smitten with it. The Quin Hotel is definitely a place for you if you want to be in the heart of the Big Apple, located on 57th Street, Sixth Avenue. It's right next to Fifth Ave – home to every fashion powerhouse, from

Louis Vuitton to Armani, as well as high street shopping a plenty. Central Park is two minutes away, should you want to go for a stroll or visit the MET for a culturally enriching experience

The Quin, already famous for its luxurious rooms and suites, has unveiled something extra special, their new Triplex Penthouse suite complete with one of New York's most expansive private outdoor hotel terraces surrounded by views of Central Park and the city. There is plenty of ambience for a romantic dinner or an intimate gathering set on top of three floors of the Quin. It's an oasis right in the beart of the city.

Taking things indoors, The Quin Penthouse has a perfect synergy between style and technology: unique artwork curated by D.K. Johnston is mixed in with plenty of state of the art technology including a 65" LED TV and a professional luxury kitchen. There is a marble wet room, rain forest showers and a deep soaking bathtub too. The master bedroom is on the third floor of the penthouse that has wall to floor windows and its own terrace, as well as a guest room and a bedroom office space. It's perfect for sharing!

You can even personalise your stay with Jung Lee of Fête, who works with guests to select everything from fresh cut flowers to accessories to create a unique experience (Jung can organise caipirinha bars or whisky tasting stations), as well as a welcome crate from Kerber's farm. Every single detail of the experience has been thought of, including the dedicated 24-bour direct line to the VIP service. We're crushing on this penthouse in a big way. Move over Blair Waldorf and Serena Van Der Woodsen, we want a bite of the NYC luxury apple.



WORDS BY JOSEPH KOCHARIAN

www.thequinbotel.com 4



Above: Christian wears suit, shirt and shoes all by Tommy Hilfiger Tailored, socks by Tommy Hilfiger Right: Theio wears suit by Paul Smith

STOCKISTS

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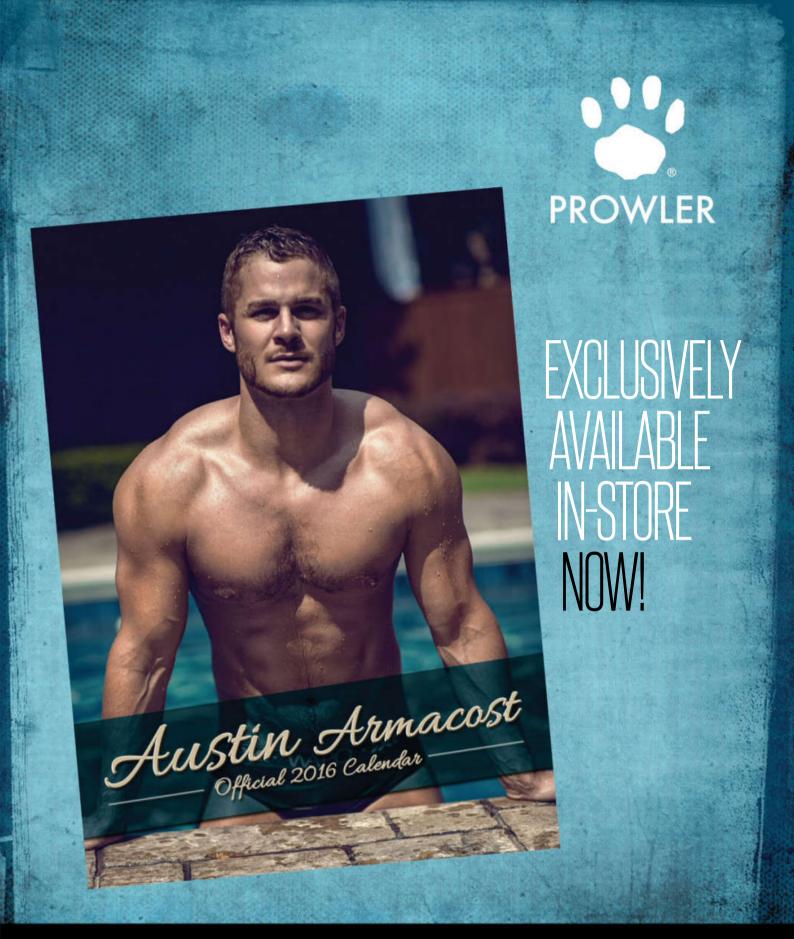
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attitude A W A R D S 2015

MAN OF THE YEAR SUPPORTED BY VIRGIN HOLIDAYS

MUSIC AWARD/INTERNATIONAL ALBUM SUPPORTED BY LOS ANGELES TOURISM AND CONVENTION BOARD

ALBUM OF THE YEAR

ACTOR OF THE YEAR SUPPORTED BY MARRIOT

TV PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR

ICON AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT
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MUSIC BREAKTHROUGH

SEXIEST MAN OF THE YEAR SUPPORTED BY POPCHIPS

TV MOMENT OF THE YEAR

STYLE HERO

MOST STYLISH MAN

MEDIA RECOGNITION AWARD

GREATEST MOMENT OF THE YEAR

HONORARY GAY

YOUNG LGBT ENTREPRENEUR SUPPORTED BY VIRGIN HOLIDAYS

ACTIVE AWARD SUPPORTED BY USN

POLITICIAN OF THE YEAR

ALLY AWARD

BOOK OF THE YEAR

BREAKTHROUGH PERFORMANCE

COMMUNITY AWARD

LEGEND AWARD

EDITOR'S SPECIAL AWARD SUPPORTED BY AUSSIEBUM

TO BENEFIT THE



ELTON JOHN AIDS FOUNDATION



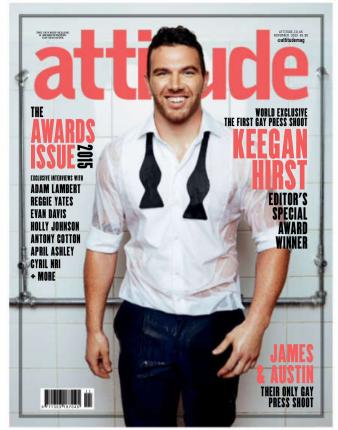




PHOTOGRAPHY: SIMON TAYLOR / STYLING: NICK BYAM JAMES AND AUSTIN WEAR ALL CLOTHES THROUGHOUT BY TOPMAN



PHOTOGRAPHY: JOSEPH SINCLAIR



PHOTOGRAPHY: LEIGH KEILY / STYLING: JOSEPH KOCHARIAN
KEEGAN WEARS SHIRT BY EMMETT AT SELFRIDGES, BOW TIE BY M&S COLLECTION,
TROUSERS BY TOMMY HILFIGER







PHOTOGRAPHY: JOSEPH SINCLAIR / STYLING: NICK BYAM CYRIL WEARS SUIT BY F&F, SHIRT BY BURTON



PHOTOGRAPHY: AUSTIN HARGRAVE / STYLING: WARREN ALFIE BAKER ADAM WEARS TUXEDO BY TOPMAN, SHIRT BY REISS, BOW TIE BY TIE BAR



PHOTOGRAPHY: JOSEPH SINCLAIR / STYLING: NICK BYAM
REGGIE WEARS TUXEDO BY GIEVES & HAWKES AT MR PORTER, SHIRT BY BRIONI AT
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WELCOME TO THE 2015 ATTITUDE AWARDS BENEFITTING THE ELTON JOHN AIDS FOUNDATION

I am thrilled to share with you that there has been an amazing and dramatic shift in the global AIDS epidemic and the Foundation is deeply proud to have played its part.

For the first time ever, during 2014 the number of people newly accessing HIV treatment around the world exceeded the number of people diagnosed with the disease.

Why is this so important? Because people living with HIV who are on the right medical treatment are up to 96% less likely to pass on HIV to anyone else. As soon as they are no longer infectious, fewer people are at risk of infection, fewer people get sick or die and the epidemic is in reverse! It's called the Tipping Point.

More than anything, we have prioritised support for those who find it hardest to get help. In October last year, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and I announced a new partnership between the Elton John AIDS Foundation and the United States government to implement a national prevention and treatment programme specifically designed to support men who have sex with men in South Africa. This is the first programme of its kind anywhere in the world. Men who have sex with men (calling themselves 'gay' is mostly too

dangerous) are up to 19 times more vulnerable to HIV than the general population. It takes courage and compassion – values that are the central to our work – to reach this group. It turns out this is not only the morally right thing to do, it is also the smart thing to do if we want to end the AIDS epidemic.

During 2015 we have continued this work, funding men who have sex with men programmes in Malawi and Kenya. Over 18,000 men will benefit from life saving HIV testing and treatment as a result of this support.

We are getting close. We could not do this without you.

Thank you to *Attitude* magazine for their generous support at the Attitude Awards. Every penny raised from the night will help us create an AIDS free future.



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James Mortimer: Coconutman, 36 x 26cm, oil on canvas





Alex Russell Flint: The Knife Thrower's Assistant, 61 \times 81 cm, oil on canvas panel

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attitude AWARDS





MARK ANDERSON

MANAGING DIRECTOR
VIRGIN HOLIDAYS

t Virgin Holidays we are delighted to be the headline sponsor of the Attitude Awards for the fourth year running. This year we're even prouder because along with the *Attitude* team, we have created a new award: 'Young LGBT Entrepreneur' of the Year. Entrepreneurship goes right to the heart and roots of Virgin and so we're really excited to be able to encourage and promote this in our community.

Virgin Holidays' partnership with *Attitude* is important because we passionately believe that travel is for everyone. Last year I launched our mission to promote travel equality across the world. We have been busy lobbying governments, tourist authorities and key partners to help them understand what they can do to make this a reality and take action.

Travel doesn't just enrich lives
- it helps transform us back
to our best. I am so pleased to
be on this journey and in the
coming months we'll share the
progress we're making and
new experiences that we're
developing for you. It's also why

I feel privileged to announce that our commitment to the Attitude Awards continues to be strong. Virgin Holidays has significantly increased its sponsorship for the awards for another two years.

The awards are deservedly about celebrating success – recognising those individuals who have uniquely contributed so much. Although there's still more to do, we're honoured again to be joining Matthew Todd, the *Attitude* team and you as we pay tribute to their achievements.

Attitude Award Winner

MAN OF THE YEAR

Evan Davis

One year into his job hosting the BBC's premier current affairs show Newsnight, and Evan Davis has become the most important gay figure on British TV.

WORDS BEN KELLY

PHOTOGRAPHY LEON CSERNOHLAVEK SUPPORTED BY



van Davis has come a long way since he began working as an economist at the Institute for Fiscal Studies back in the late 1980s. After covering economics for the BBC in the 1990s (including on Newsnight), he went on to host the hugely popular Dragon's Den from 2005, and served six years on BBC Radio 4's Today programme. But by rising to the top job in BBC current affairs, Evan is arguably the most important gay man on British TV, and for this, we are proud to name him our Man of the Year.

When I first interviewed Evan last December, he was just settling into the routine of a twelve hour day, culminating in a fast paced, jam packed live show each night. "I was just beginning to think 'my god, this is quite difficult to do well!'" he laughs, "and now I'm feeling a little bit more competent doing it my way, and not trying to please other people." Sitting

down with him for a second time as he approaches his first anniversary in the job, Evan has indeed brought his own style to proceedings. "There's a presumption that the show is about aggressive interviewing, and I'm trying to undermine that assumption. I'm not trying to get rid of adversarial interviews - I think we should do quite a few of them - but I don't want it to be the default or the presumption, I think we should be willing to hold power to account, but we should also be willing to let power explain what its thinking is."

In the interest of explaining one's thinking, I cast Evan back to our initial interview, which provoked strong criticism over comments he made about the gay community – "my little flurry in a teacup" as he calls it. When asked why he thought drug taking and self-destructive behaviour remained problematic in the gay community, he

suggested that the absence of some of the factors that discipline heterosexuals, such as children, lead to some gay people having more time and money to indulge in certain lifestyles. The comments were widely reported in the mainstream press, but it was the reaction from within the community which was most harsh.

"It was on the basis of a bit of anecdotal speculation, so I hadn't intended it to come across as a great moral pronouncement," he explains, "but I don't really resile from anything I said. I think it's just a thing we have to watch out for." We discuss the phenomenon of chemsex and Evan expresses his concern with its increasing prominence, particularly in London. "We don't want a community where the values or the norms of social behaviour stretch too far in one direction, away from other directions.

"I think if our community was lying flat on its back, having just



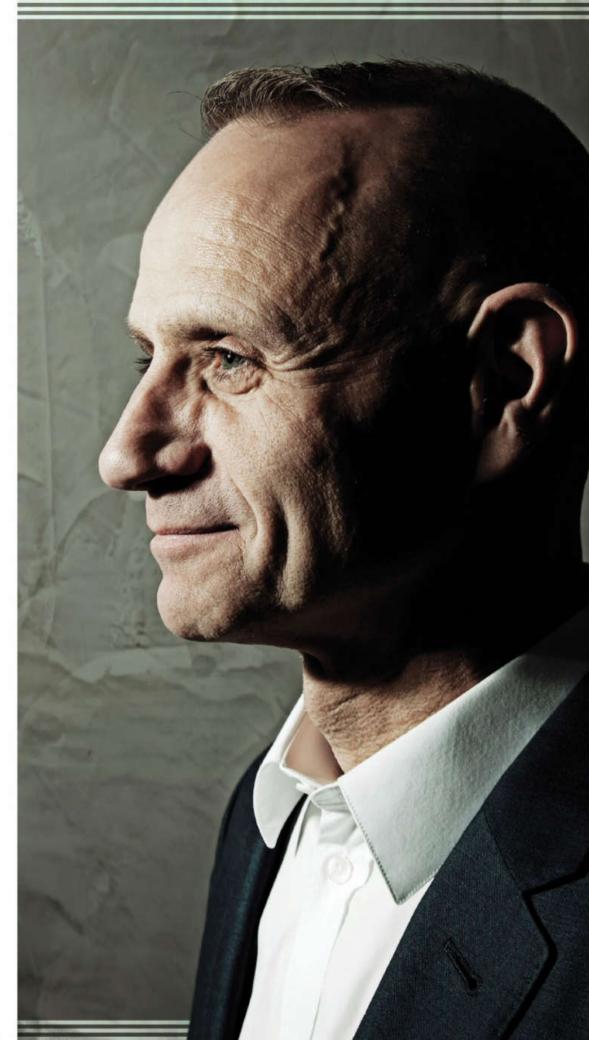


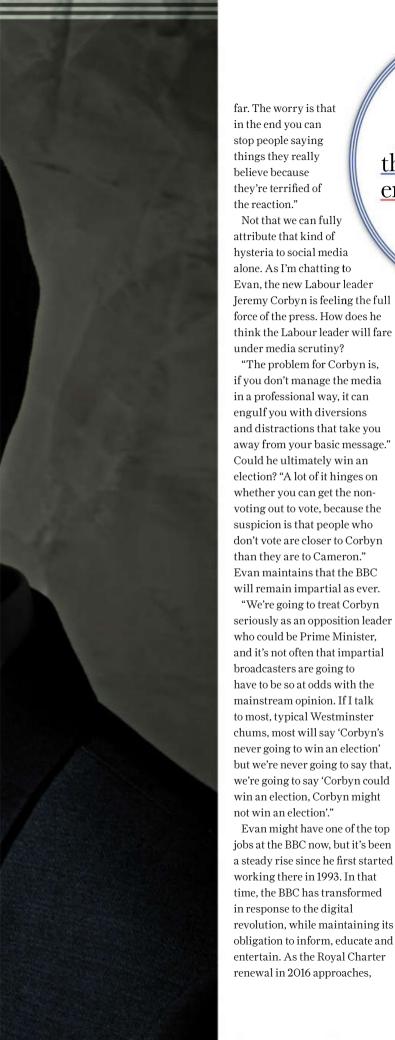
been ravaged by persecution and oppression then you might say everything we should do should be about solidarity, about supporting our community, sticking together, and getting ourselves tolerated. I think we're in a better place than that at the moment. I think there's been quite a lot of acceptance, quite a lot of legislative change in favour of the gay community, and I take the view that our community at the moment is strong enough to have some debate and discussion and some self-criticism."

Evan found his tweets blowing up again in August when, on *Newsnight*, he described Tinder as the app that allows straight people "to behave like gay men", which again inspired the wrath of many gay viewers, who assumed he was implying their promiscuity.

"I didn't actually think it was a particularly disparaging remark about our community, personally. The gays have been using Gaydar and Grindr for at least a decade, way before Tinder came along. It would have been awkward if it had been a nongay presenter reading it, but I had felt it was more possible to cross that line, being a gay man. Who incidentally doesn't have a Grindr profile," he adds.

So, is this usually uncontroversial character becoming more of an eyebrow raiser, or is the gay community just too sensitive? "I think it's a more general thing, and this is a social media phenomenon. Social media tends to encourage snapping at people for things that they've said, and I think it's overdone. You have to have some sense of proportion about whether what somebody has said - or the intention with which it was said - was unreasonable or not, and I think social media has just gone a bit





"I take the view that our community at the moment is strong enough to have some debate and discussion"

Not that we can fully

"The problem for Corbyn is,

"We're going to treat Corbyn

Evan might have one of the top

Evan recognises that there is a "legitimate debate" to be had around the role of the Beeb, but stays expectantly neutral. "The only thing I will say about the BBC is, when you look at great institutions of state - the army, local government, the police, the civil service, the BBC, the NHS, the education sector - I think if vou were a foreigner, and vou were looking at the performance of these things in the UK, you wouldn't say that the one which needed urgent reform is the BBC. It is an internationally respected, national institution and I think that is great and I'm proud to work for it in that respect."

With his increased profile, I wonder if Evan has noticed his celebrity grow in the past year. "It has added a bit to the profile, definitely, but the thing I am still most recognised for in the street is *Dragon's Den*, which is extraordinary to me." Even so, there are more and more indicators that the past year has seen Evan move into household name territory. He was the subject of a W1A episode, in which the team were seen handling a negative reaction to the fictional news that he would be doing Strictly Come Dancing (something he says is "not gonna happen" in real life). "That was a moment for me," he laughs, "and I only made a cameo role but it was nice to be a script line."



On the other hand.

how amusing does he find his elf-like caricature on Newzoids? "I've seen it," he nods. "Do I need to get my ears worked on?!" Nevertheless, he sees the silver lining. "I think most of us in TV hope that somebody notices us. In this industry you're speaking into a

camera or a microphone, and it's a void. You can't see an audience, and ultimately you want to know there's someone at home watching. And one of the nice things about these imitations and parodies is that it shows you somebody has watched - they may hate it - but somebody has watched, so I take it with quite a good spirit." Indeed people aren't just

watching him on TV - they're watching him everywhere he goes. "You know how sometimes you do things in public," he says, grinning cheekily, "you cut someone up in the car, or you push into a queue - now I just think, I mustn't do that!"

Evan accepts news of his award with typical humility. "Well, it's sort of embarrassing really, because it's so obviously undeserved but honestly it is really, really nice. I think it's a generous award, to put it mildly. I've had other things for programmes I've worked on, but this one means a lot. It's partly because *Attitude* is quite cool, and it's nice to get one that's a little bit out of news and current affairs. And the other people who are getting awards are people I really love, respect, fancy, whatever - just different kinds of people. And that makes it touching; it's a really nice award."

Newsnight is on BBC2, week nights from 10.30pm.





Attitude Award Winner

MUSIC AWARD/INTERNATIONAL ALBUM

Adam Lambert

Adam Lambert hit the spotlight in American Idol's eighth season. His second album hit the Number 1 spot in the USA, making him the first openly gay man to top the Billboard chart. This year he completed his tour with Queen, adding his powerhouse vocals to those legendary Freddie Mercury hits, and released his latest acclaimed album, The Original High.

CREATIVE DIRECTION
JOSEPH KOCHARIAN
STYLING
WARREN ALFIE BAKER

PHOTOGRAPHY AUSTIN HARGRAVE HAIR BY TARA JEAN AT JK ARTISTS USING ORIBE AND ASHLEY GOMILA

SHOT ON LOCATION AT THE GARLAND HOTEL, LOS ANGELES

SUPPORTED BY





hen told that
Attitude is giving
him the coveted
Music Award, Adam Lambert
yelps with delight. "Wow!" he
yells down the phone from his
Los Angeles home. "That's a
tall compliment there. I feel
very honoured."

Adam deserves it. Not only is he an out gay pop star who champions LGBT causes, he's also a singer with an epic voice – good enough, in fact, to fill the boots of the legendary Freddie Mercury. His fantastic new album, *The Original High*, mixes pop, rock, dance and electro to dazzling effect.

It's no wonder the UK gay community has embraced 33-year-old Lambert, who has guest starred on *Glee*, got to ring in the New Year with a BBC-broadcasted Queen concert and who has a flamboyant style that's impossible to ignore.

"I still feel like we're getting to know each other, which is wonderful," the American Idol runner-up says of winning the heart of the UK's gay community. "It's like the beginning of a relationship, like the honeymoon phase between me and the gay scene in the UK. I've been out and about here and there and I have friends in the UK, but I think I need to dive in deeper."

Will the guy who's no stranger to guyliner do it in full glam get-up? "Actually I've been dressing down a bit," he insists. "I haven't been quite as outrageous, but I guess someone might hear me say that and go 'Are you serious?'"

In an industry where out role models are still not as prevalent as they should be, he's got an impressively across-the-board fanbase. "I'm looking at things on Twitter and Facebook and most people don't put their sexuality as part of their handle so I'm not seeing a difference between gay fans and straight fans," he says. "I think there's a broad spectrum in there and I like that. I like the idea of my audience being a melting pot of

different kinds of people."

One thing that unites them all is a love for the new album, which is Adam's third since he did *Idol* in 2009 and his first top tenner in the UK. It shows off his astonishing vocal range, with Lambert himself

saying "it's stretched me a bit and it's kind of encouraged me to explore other colours in my voice. Everyone knows I like to sing big and bombastic and there's a lot of that on there, of course, but I loved exploring other, more nuanced







He met Brian May and Roger Taylor when they performed on *Idol* and they've since toured the world together. "And getting to perform with them on New Year's Eve for television was incredible," he marvels. "What a great way for me to introduce myself to factions of the UK audience who might not have known who I was."

Queen of Pop to fronting Queen.

And what would he say to Freddie Mercury if he could meet him in some alternate universe? "Oh man, I wouldn't know where to start. I think I would say 'Thank you so much for letting me run with this and I hope I made you proud'."

Lambert's genius as he tears into the likes of *Killer Queen* and *Crazy Little Thing Called Love* is that he never, ever tries to copy Freddie. "That would have been tacky, I think. That's not my game. I'm not an impersonator. It is about finding a balance in terms of making it mine but not straying too far from the original because that would have felt sacrilegious."

And does he have hair envy when stood next to the follicly-unchallenged colossus that is Brian May? Lambert, who sports a fine quiff on his album cover, laughs loudly. "My hair has a lot of lift as well, so I'm good."

He is, to make a bizarre comparison, America's equivalent of Jane McDonald – working on a cruise ship (at age 19) before being catapulted to fame via a TV show. In between, though, the theatre-trained kid did musicals, even appearing opposite Val Kilmer in *The Ten Commandments: The Musical*. Critics loathed Kilmer but they praised Lambert and he got to flex his acting chops again as Elliot Gilbert aka Starchild on *Glee*.

dynamics."

As a kid he grew up in San Diego grooving to Madonna, Michael and Janet, before getting into Queen, Bowie and T-Rex, not to mention Led Zeppelin and The Beatles, plus dance music and 90s vocal house. All his influences are there on the album and Adam says everyone he meets has a different favourite track.

Mine? That has to be *Ghost Town*, the lead single which has absolutely nothing to do with the Madge song of the same

name. "When I found out about that I was like 'Oh no, I don't want people to think I'm trying to compete with her'," Lambert declares. "She's Madonna, she's an icon and I grew up really looking up to her."

He's gone from loving the



He had, in fact, originally auditioned for the role of quarterback Finn Hudson but the producers went with Cory Monteith instead. The actor died of an overdose in 2013, just after it was announced Adam was joining the cast. "It was a little sombre going on set in the wake of that. There was some sadness around, but everyone stayed professional and positive."

More acting is hopefully on the cards. "It's always been a part of my spirit. I've always been a performer and it's sort of a natural thing for me." He laughs about not wanting to sound his own trumpet. "And if anyone thinks I'm any good at it then great."

Adam comes across as funny, confident and, on stage at least, as cocky as a strutting peacock. I wonder aloud what he's like when all eyes aren't on him. "I've gotten to a point in my life where there's kind of a split in my personality. Sometimes I'm very extroverted and social, going to dinners and parties and meeting new people. Then there are other times where I just want to be alone and I kind of hibernate."

Having split from boyfriend Sauli Koskinen, a Finnish TV host, a couple of years back his current status is "single and mingling". With more Queen dates looming and tour dates of his own too (not in the UK at the moment but he's working on it) it's a tough juggling act. "I mean, I'm open to meeting new

people," he tells me. "I've been in relationships and they're beautiful but this career takes you all over the place. I'm always travelling and I'd need a very specific person who can

handle that."

As his fame skyrockets,
Lambert is determined to
remain his authentic self. "And
it's gotten a lot easier. In the
beginning that path of how to
stay myself and figure
out the business
was a little

confusing. Now I've found my footing a little bit and I feel more confident and my material is 100% me."

Choosing LGBT causes to support has a lot to do with scheduling, he admits. "But what it really comes down to is 'Am I inspired by the work they are doing?'" And he's thrilled with the way the world in general and America in particular is slowly but surely going. "There's so much progress being made in

terms of sexuality and people understanding the grey area between the black and the white. All these labels are maybe necessary right now to help us understand all these different avenues that gender identity and sexual identity can take, but I hope as we move forward we can just identify as ourselves."

As for his own identity, Adam dismisses tabloid tittle-tattle that he might be bisexual rather than full-on gay. Yes, there have been experiences with women in the past. "But I don't consider myself all that fluid in my sexuality. I appreciate when other people are and I try to stay openminded. I encourage anybody to explore outside what they have set for themselves." He laughs. "But I'm a homo." • The album *The Original*

The album *The Original High* and new single *Another Lonely Night* are
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UK ALBUM OF THE YEAR

Years & Years Communion

It's been a big year for London band Years & Years, whose debut album entered the UK charts at Number 1 earlier this summer.

t's been hard to go anywhere in 2015 without hearing the breakthrough Years & Years album Communion. It has been constantly streaming in the Attitude office, whether we put on a major radio station or a random iPod playlist, and you're just as likely to hear it at a club, or a house party as you are in the Uber home (and then again on Sunday Brunch in the morning).

We've also been more than taken by front man Olly Alexander who is redrawing the lines for what it means to be a gay pop star. In an industry that has still been known to muffle the sexuality of artists until they've sold big or broken America, it really does matter

that Olly has been openly out from the get go, happily discussing his boyfriend and supporting LGBT causes; and all the while their music transcends the boundaries of every demographic.

Whether it's the belters like Desire and the number one smash King, or even the lighter stuff like Take Shelter and Eyes

PHOTOGRAPHY: RICHARD STOW FASHION: COLINE BACH GROOMING: ELAINE LYNSKEY CREATIVE DIRECTION: JOSEPH KOCHARIAN FASHION ASSISTANTS: DELPHINE LESIEWICZ & ROSE ROWSON

Shut, Years & Years made the pop music that defined this year, and straddled the line between pure pop and what many would consider to be the credible alternative. The proof is in the pudding. Just three months after the album's release, it's already been certified Gold, and the band continues to shine.





Attitude Award Winner ACTOR OF THE YEAR

Cyril Nri

Our Actor of the Year, who made such a dynamic impact in TV's Cucumber, thinks his sexuality is no big deal. But Cyril Nri will talk about it one more time. Just for us

WORDS
DAVID MCGILLIVRAY

PHOTOGRAPHY JOSEPH SINCLAIR STYLING NICK BYAM GROOMING SANDRA HADI

SUPPORTED BY



n the café of London's National Theatre, where he's appearing as the Governor of an Australian penal colony in a revival of Timberlake Wertenbaker's 1988 play Our Country's Good, Cyril Nri tells me that the photo shoot he's just done to tie in with his Attitude Award was good fun. He liked his "James Bondy" dinner jacket. "But I'm not up against Idris for the part," he's quick to remind me. Nri appears sufficiently easy-going for me to ask if we can talk about anything. "Yes, I don't think anything's out of bounds," he replies. Sex may rear its head,

I caution him. "I'm sure it will," he says resignedly.

Over the next hour we talk about everything from the migrant crisis to opportunities in the UK for black actors. But sex comes up because how could it not? Nri starred as Lance, tragic victim of homophobia, in Cucumber, a TV drama that was criticised for having too much sex. Nri is on record as saying it's the best thing he's ever done. "It was, definitely," he confirms, but adds with the modesty that dominates our conversation, "if anyone's to thank for any awards it's [writer] Russell T.

Davies, who's just brilliant." It will have to be me who goes on record to declare that Cyril Nri's achingly humane performance contains a heart-stopping moment that was one of the most powerful on British TV. Actor of the Year? No contest.

We'll return to *Cucumber* but Nri's 54 year journey to that triumph must come first. The son of a Nigerian father and a Barbadian mother, who met at university in London in the late 1950s, Nri was born in Nigeria in 1961, shortly before the Biafran people rose up against the Nigerian government. In



1968, while Nri's father stayed in Nigeria setting up radio stations to help the Biafran cause, Nri's mother escaped with their children on one of the last planes out of the war-torn country. Its destination was Portugal. A month later the family arrived in London and were welcomed as refugees. How times have changed.

"I totally understand the situation of having to move and I wonder, when the whole world is made up of migrants, how you can say certain people can't come here," Nri says. "What they give to a society is huge. These aren't people who aren't willing to work. I don't understand the moral perspective on this and I don't know how some people can say we're going to refuse. It causes logistical issues but all those can be handled."

Nri attended Holland Park School, at the time a famously bohemian establishment run by a headmaster who encouraged his pupils to explore. Nri saw nothing extraordinary in dating girls while also finding boys attractive. "I fell for a French exchange student," he recalls. "I was deeply enthralled by him." The only concerns he had were caused by his refugee status. A teacher saw that the young Nri was unhappy and gave him the complete works of Shakespeare. "I think you'll find," said the teacher, "that pretty much every situation has been covered in here." Before long Nri won the lead in the school production of The Threepenny Opera. He moved on to the Young Vic Youth Theatre.

When Nri was about 17 he made a pick-up at a nearby cruising spot. "We were just walking into a bush, police came from everywhere and we were both arrested," Nri tells me. "I was fined £50, I paid it and I tried to keep it quiet.

"I was playing the first top black cop in a long running series so there was a lot of press around that"

It was deeply embarrassing," he admits. When he refers to "doing something wrong" and returning to dating girls, I suggest that he was frightened into turning straight. "I suppose that was part of it," he responds, "but there were other things. There were social pressures." Nri went on to father two sons with a female partner. He draws the line at naming them.

After training at the Bristol Old Vic, Nri had almost immediate success as a professional actor. It was while he was appearing as Adam Okaro in the TV series The Bill that he came out. "I was playing the first top black cop in a long running series so there was a lot of press around that," Nri recalls. During one interview a tabloid journalist, who may have heard rumours, began digging. Nri quite happily told her that he had slept with men and women. "This was a tiny part of the conversation and it became a headline," Nri says with scorn. "The problem with people is that they get bound up with where you put your bits," he sighs. "It's really so dull."

At the moment the problem to which Nri refers is very great

indeed in the country where he was born. "In Nigeria I don't go shouting about it, but I don't deny it," he explains. "I don't have a partner so it's not as

though I'm walking down the road hand in hand. Men have dressed as women and this has been accepted on a tribal level forever. It is only when people





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start trying to make a name for themselves in some kind of political or religious manner that it becomes an issue. In Uganda I used to teach film making but I refuse to do that now. I don't feel I should be helping in a place where bigotry is on such a great level."

Nri dismisses criticism that Cucumber perpetuated the stereotype of the sex-mad gay man. "The programme dealt with sex but it also dealt with the breakdown of a relationship. If you're just going to look at the outside then maybe it's not for you." Nri also has "no problem" with the fact that Vincent Franklin, who played Lance's troubled partner Henry, is not gay. "The label is on the can and it's called actor," he states. "I thought it was a brilliant portrayal." Nri points out that, if straight actors are not allowed to play gay characters, it follows that he himself should not have played Adam Okaro, who wasn't gay.

His reaction on being told about the Attitude Award was "quiet delight" tinged with Cyril Nri playing Lance Sullivan in Cucumber

disbelief. Nri thinks back to the time he found himself at the BAFTAs picking up awards for a short film he'd made. He remembers thinking, "This shouldn't really be happening

to a little Biafran boy." Like fellow thesp Ian McKellen, he has no regrets about being honest about his private life, but wouldn't cite coming out as one of the best things he's done. "It's liberating," he concedes, "but when I said it to the *Sunday Mirror* I thought, 'Can we just do this and get it over with? Because I don't want to keep doing it."

Yet, I say regretfully, here we are talking about it again... except that it's always good to remind young people that coming out is almost always preferable to the stress of deceit. "I agree and I think that's great," Nri says in a burst of enthusiasm, "but 90 per cent of the young people I meet, they don't give a shit. There are a few people with tiny minds and, if you want to hang out at that bus stop, please feel free. But I can't be bothered to join you. I've caught the bus and moved on."

• Our Country's Good is playing at the National Theatre in London throughout October. nationaltheatre.org.uk/shows/ our-countrys-good





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Attitude Award Winner TV PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR AWARD

Antony Cotton

From Queer As Folk to guest spots in Absolutely Fabulous, Antony Cotton had already garnered an impressive acting CV. But his most famous role is as Sean Tully in Coronation Street, undoubtedly one of the UK's most high profile LGBT characters.

WORDS: PAUL FLYNN PHOTOGRAPHY: JOSEPH SINCLAIR GROOMING: MELISSA BOURNE

n a taxi conversation from the Thames Barrier to Waterloo station, Antony Cotton takes a brief pause to consider how he differs from the character he plays in Coronation Street, Sean Tully. Since 2003, Sean and, by extension, Antony have become gently omnipresent in the national living room. "I'm not necessarily intense storylinewise," he says, "but I am intense schedule-wise. I live at number 11, I'm in the factory and I'm in the pub, so I'm across the exterior and the interiors. Every

episode has six scenes in the Rovers. So, I'm there a lot." If anybody would care to tot up the sums, Sean/Antony is perhaps the most visible gay man, per view per capita in Britain of the last decade.

Sean's major usefulness on *Corrie* is as a decorative, quick-witted chorus figure, an emotional pointer for viewers. "Unusually for a Coronation Street character," says Antony, "Sean doesn't have any enemies." When his fellow resident at the old house of Elsie Tanner ("that still gives me a shiver"),

Jason Grimshaw was recently hospitalised at the hands of tin-pot gangster, Callum Logan, Sean was afforded a particularly touching, poignant purpose. Jason's parents Eileen and Tony did the heavy-lifting for the coma scenes. But it was only when Sean touched Jason on the cheek and said "What have they done to your beautiful face, Jay-boy?" that the audience were prompted to really care.

When you become accustomed to fictional characters airing your thoughts, it's difficult to separate them from the actor behind them. The thought of Antony not mooning over his dishy parish priest, wearing a matching-print shirt and tie combination or quoting a spry early Kylie Minogue song in Underworld feels as unimaginable as Carla Connor actress Alison King not betting while swigging from a vat of Shiraz. Soap opera stars of enduring gestation are like favourite cushions you can't bring yourself to give the charity shop.

Of course Antony is nothing like Sean. "I am an alpha male



and he is not," he says, finally. "Does that make me sound like a wanker?" Quite the contrary. For anyone that knows Antony, the claim bears up to close scrutiny. He's a tenacious, funny, memorable and gifted man, the absolute product of the city that spawned him. He's as slim as a whippet and sharp as a blade. Today, he's carrying a Louis Vuitton hold-all and has just flown in from a week in Ibiza. He's excited about the following weekend when he will once again be introducing one of his closest friends, Sir Ian McKellen, to thousands at the Manchester Pride festival. These stalwart figures of British gay inclusiveness will be bringing out a great new arbiter and fellow Attitude Award winner, rugby player Keegan Hirst onto the stage to join them. Antony Cotton is an emblem of self-made Northern achievement. He's lived life as the most famous alpha gay Mancunian fearlessly.

"There is just something inherently Manc about me," he notes. "I live for that city.

And you know why that is? Because it's been really good to me." The arrangement is reciprocal. Antony is a patron of Pride, an ambassador for Manchester United F.C., a Coronation Street star and, to complete his score-card for full house in Manchester Bingo, was once the fellow who sorted out the guest list for The Haçienda ("heady, mental times"). No-one has been closer allied to the panoply of brilliant things Manchester does since the death of its irrepressible town-crier, Tony Wilson. "In the intro for the Manchester Pride brochure," he says, "the last line of it says 'there are no two greater words suited than Manchester and Pride.' Those two words just go together and that's nothing to do with sexuality. That's to do with Mancunians. They are very, very proud of the city. They're very proud of themselves."

He lives in a converted farmhouse the size of a small street, 30 miles from his home city with Peter, his boyfriend of over a decade who works as the production buyer on *Corrie*. Peter's dad is the construction manager on the show, his uncle Alan runs the car service there. Antony has the ear of the finest populist Northern storytellers of their age, not just at *Corrie* but at Red Productions, where writer Russell T. Davies and Antony's fellow Man Utd obsessive, producer Nicola Schindler first cast him in the show which "kick-started my adult life and changed my life", *Queer as Folk*.

In a scene redolent of one of Eileen's interchanges with Sean, Antony came out to his mother at 17. "She fell on the floor and pretended - which I didn't know at the time - to cry. I remember being stood over her and the first thought in my head was 'this is the worst thing that's ever happened to me'. She was on floor by the breakfast bar stools and then she started smiling. I'd been stood over her, freezing, thinking 'oh fuck, why did I do it? I shouldn't have told her!' And she got up and she said 'oh, of course I knew,' I said 'when?' and she said 'when you

were about three." She went on to regale him with a story of his young self, twirling through a rail of frocks in the razzy Manchester department store, Kendals. "She said 'come away, those are for grown women, they aren't for you. They're for big girls.' And apparently I asked 'when I grow up will I wear dresses like these?"

Antony was a child actor at The Oldham Theatre Workshop. He says the time attending his rigorously disciplined alma mater were "the best years of my life" and he was part of an illustrious peer group that included Anna Friel, Marsha Thomason, Gemma Wardle and Lisa Riley. He'd built up a strong stage and screen portfolio by the time he left school at 18, but castings became more problematic as he grew into young adulthood. Parts for men of his physical countenance resolutely refused to be written. "There was a time when every job I ever went for either I got it or Kieran O'Brien or William Ash got it. I'd had a good run of



it. Then I got to an age where if there was a part in *Heartbeat*, it would be for a thug that would rob the corner shop. It got to that stage where I wasn't getting the work because there was always going to be a bigger lad for the part, like Chris Coghill."

He was working behind the bar at the syelte second-wave Canal Street bar Velvet when he heard about Queer as Folk. "They sent out the sides and I was like, I really have got to get this job." The part of Alexander had originally been written with Russell's best friend, Phil Collinson in mind. "I got the phone call and I said to [his then boss] Mark - god rest his soul my agent's just called and told me I've got the job in Queer as Folk. At that time it was just two scenes and she said 'Oh, I've got some other news for you. You're in it all.' And I was like 'what?' She said 'there's 8 episodes' and I said to Mark 'sorry, I know it's mid-service but I'm fucking off to get drunk. I've got a job!' Mark, god love him, went 'go on, off you go." Collinson gave up acting and went on to find massive success as the producer of the revival of the Doctor Who franchise with Davies.

The doors for Antony began opening, moving him conspicuously up a professional gear. In the wake of the drama's notoriety the parts appeared. He was cast in *Absolutely Fabulous* and for the stage in the Pet Shop Boys' musical *Closer To Heaven*, where he met his great friend, the writer Jonathan Harvey, now the author of so many of Sean Tully's memorably crisp lines.

His *Corrie* arrival is a lesson in consummately Antony Cotton tenacity. After bumping into casting director June West in the interval of a play at The Royal Exchange theatre, a conversation ensued. "She said 'why have you never done

Corrie?' I said 'because you've never asked me'. She said 'oh. it' doesn't really work like that' and I said 'I know, but I've never auditioned for Coronation Street.' She said 'why' and I said 'because it would break my heart if I didn't get it.' Driving on the way home I decided to act on impulse and do something about it." He wrote new, incoming Executive Producer Tony Wood a card. "It said 'Dear Tony, welcome to Weatherfield. You've never had a homosexual on Coronation Street. If you ever want one then I'm the man to

play him. I've got my own house, my own car, I don't do drugs and, best of all, I'm cheap. Come on Tony, you know you want to, best of luck, Antony Cotton'."

In 12 years on the Street, Antony has earned himself a National Television and Stonewall Award, neatly bookending his great gift to British culture. He's brought a real, if fictional, gay man onto British television, an emblem of his times, a character that reminded the Northern suburbs that men like Martin Platt and Kevin Webster, Christians like Emily Bishop and obviously brassy barmaids of the Liz McDonald ilk would not blanche at sharing a drink and enjoying the casual conversation of a gay man like Sean Tully in the 21st century Rovers Return. In 2015 it's impossible to imagine the show without him in it.

For all their differences, there is one distinctly appealing trait that Antony Cotton shares deeply in common with Sean Tully. "That character has never, ever apologised for who he is," he says. "And he never, ever will."





Attitude Award Winner ICON AWARD

Yoko Ono

Activist, artist and survivor, we are thrilled to honour one of the world's most iconic women, Yoko Ono. DJ and writer Princess Julia pays her a unique tribute.

WORDS: PRINCESS JULIA SUPPORTED BY



hat about the time Yoko Ono did a public appearance at gay London nightclubs Crash and The Ghetto to promote remixed dance tracks that she had released in the noughties? There she was in the middle of a sea of topless boys yelling out her words of wisdom. I wonder if she ever thought she'd be the queen of disco when she started out. But then Yoko never puts anything out of the question. Nevertheless, I think she might have been secretly in awe at the impact she had. She sang a revamped version of Everyman/Everywoman, that added new words to the original in support of gay relationships and marriage, which resonated within the community:

'Everyman has a man who loves him, Everywoman has a woman who loves her'.

"Isn't it amazing?" she said, "I think it's great. But it should not be great, it should be normal." Back in 2005 the long fight for equal marriage rights hadn't become the widespread cause it was to become. Yoko can add visionary to her list of talents.

She's a slight little lady dressed in all black, wearing dark glasses and her signature hat, but it's her huge presence that really blows you away. Her interests are wide and varied; she's curious about everything and everyone. It's hard to believe she's 82!

In the 60s she was involved in the conceptual art movement Fluxus. Fiercely independent, she went on to set up a loft gallery space in downtown New York and initiated a change of direction in contemporary art and how to present it. Ono embraces everything; she is the queen and cornerstone of self-expression. An art activist creating installations, she performs, makes films, conjures up meaningful memes, talks of world peace, equality and delves into the human condition with a profundity that provokes much thought. You might think her life only started when she met and married John Lennon, but Yoko was already out there striving ahead with her unique way of looking at life.

I particularly love the 'Instruction Paintings' that she's worked on for many years. What's the thought behind







them? Yoko says, "Instruction painting separates painting into two different functions: the instructions and the realisation. Instruction painting makes it possible to explore the invisible, the world beyond the concept of time and space. And then, sometimes later, the instructions themselves will disappear and be properly forgotten."

She likes to view things from a different angle. Pioneering? Yes she's that too. On social media she enlightens us with her latest thoughts, tweeting her message: "Don't fight for Peace, STAND for Peace. Think Peace, Act Peace, and Spread Peace. Write, voice, and appeal." She posts images of her world and words on Instagram.

Every year she lights up her Imagine Peace Tower at Reykjavik, Iceland; a tower of light soaring into the sky. Her message is universal, and in these days of so many atrocities perhaps it's important to tune into Yoko's world of hope and remember, "It's better to dance than to march through life."



t's unlikely that any winner of an Attitude Music
Breakthrough Award will ever break through quite so spectacularly as 25-year-old
North Londoner Jess Glynne did in 2015. The voice of last year's biggest UK smash *Rather Be*, which she recorded with Clean Bandit, Glynne has personally remained little known until recently. Yet within the space of the last 18 months, she has matched the current record held

by Cheryl Fernandez-Versini of the most Number One singles by a British solo female (five) – a remarkable achievement which in contrast, took Cheryl five years to achieve.

And those were five outrageously catchy tracks, totally deserving, and each as memorable as the last: My Love (with Route 94), Hold My Hand, Not Letting Go (with Tinie Tempah) and Don't Be So Hard On Yourself, in addition to Rather Be.

Hold My Hand in particular, will surely be in contest for Best British Single when the BRITs roll around in a few months. Just when you think you've heard its sparse, high piano intro one too many times, the chorus kicks in and you're reminded that it never gets old. And with Don't Be So Hard on Yourself, she offered seconds, its status as a perfect pop banger too hard to ignore.

Glynne's voice is beautifully clear, and with the storytelling

on her number one debut album *I Cry When I Laugh*, she positions herself as representative of the British youth of today. She is also one of a new generation of LGBT figures who refuse to be labelled when it comes to sexuality. Along with peers like Sam Smith and Olly Alexander of Years & Years, Jess Glynne is a symbol of modern diversity, sailing high in the far reaching world of music.

The album ICry When IL augh is out now



Starts Thursday 22 October 9pm



Attitude Award Winner ICON AWARD

Holly Johnson

The *Relax* hitmaker was unapologetically open about his sexuality during the conservative 80s. After a sold-out solo tour last year, *Attitude* honours a man who helped pave the way when other pop stars remained deeply closeted...

WORDS: PAUL FLYNN PHOTOGRAPHY: TREVOR LEIGHTON SUPPORTED BY



hen Holly Johnson began the preparations and rehearsals for his first solo tour in 2014, an astonishing 25 years since his first solo record Blast, he decided to perform at least one track from each of the six albums of his authorship that comprise his brilliant back catalogue. The selections from the two Frankie Goes to Hollywood albums that sent Holly to an unparalleled level of global ubiquity for an out gay man in the mid-80s were easy to cherry pick. There is perhaps no stronger three-song finale to rival his incendiary pummel through sex (Relax), war (Two Tribes) and a particularly devastating romantic optimism

(*The Power of Love*) in the entire pop cannon. To the shift in British gay acceptance, these songs are deeply symbolic. Each night, they brought the house down.

Over Saturday lunch at Soho, he considers the 18 months that have passed since re-entering the pop fray with his splendid album, *Europa*. "There must be something very resilient about me, I'll say that. Or I'm a glutton for punishment. But music has always been a constant in my life." This month he will release a remixes set, that neatly abridges a modern history of the dance-floor. There are contributions from 70s disco executive Tom Moulton.

80s house pioneer Frankie Knuckles, the 90s French filter maestro Bob Sinclair and a thoroughly modern addition to the queer quick-step, Poisonous Relationship.

On tour, it was perhaps some of the lesser known of his work that proved the enduring fascination of Holly Johnson. As a pop writer he's a poetic, firebrand observer of human nature. From *Europa*, the showstopping number in the set-list was the shimmering ballad, *Lonesome Town*. He's possessed of clever insight into how social mores intertwine with personal desire. The song he chose from his second solo suite, 1991's *Dreams That Money Can't Buy*, was

Holly Shot at PLEASUREDOME HQ

Black Suite: E Tautz

Black Shirt: E Tautz

Bow Tie: Hacket

Watch: Panerai Black Seal

Ring: The Great Frog





"The gay scene has stayed in a time warp in many ways, whereas dance music has turned into a global business"

a semi-autobiographical number that places the loss of gay men's innocence against the multiple amusements of old Piccadilly, *Penny Arcade*.

"Even though it was never released as a single," he says, "it was the only one that Dan Hartman produced on that record and I really cherished the memory of working with him." Hartman was an icon of the golden age of disco, the author of Instant Replay and Relight My Fire, who helped anchor Blast. Penny Arcade was the last song Holly and Dan worked on together before Hartman died from an HIV-related brain tumour in Miami, '94. Maybe it was just me, but during the shows he performed across 2014/15, I couldn't help but think that Holly was singing some of the art Keith Haring never got to make, the riotous humour Kenny Everett didn't get to cajole, the rock mayhem Freddie Mercury was denied and the clothes Leigh Bowery didn't quite get to fashion. Penny Arcade provided a pivot for all their stories.

What was perhaps most affecting about his recent tour was how such a born performer had stayed away from centrestage for so long. In his rococo hotel dressing room before his first show in Birmingham, Holly applied his own make-up like an old pro, slipped into something chic and sparkly,

finished the look off with gloves and sunglasses before parading down the hallway to his waiting car, reminding you that stardom is not something you step into but something that, at its most unequivocal,

inhabits you. When he played The Liverpool Philharmonic Hall earlier this summer, the performer allowed himself a moment of nostalgia. "That was a school trip as a child, you know? Things like that were amazing, really." He brought along his old school friend, Peter May, to a show in Ibiza he played at the Hard Rock Hotel. "That was a highlight," he says. Still observant of how the gay nightlife demimonde turns, he stayed for the late night revelry. "I couldn't get over how straight Ibiza is now. The gay world only has Anfora, which is a sort of throwback of gayness and La Troya, which in a way just reminded me of Area in New York in 1985. It looked a bit like the Relax video, actually. The gay scene has stayed in a time

warp in many ways, whereas



dance music has turned into a global business."

In a sensational three decades, Holly's world has shown remarkable consistency, while staying alert to the interesting margins that have nudged the pop mainstream. "I love to know what the gays are doing," he says, laughing. The Antony and The Johnsons album, *I Am a Bird Now*, was a pivotal point for the singer in reawakening the queer aesthetic he'd taken to the heart of the mainstream with Frankie. "That was just a mind-blowing moment for me."

He's watched the irresistible rise of John Grant at close quarters, as both friend and admirer. "I saw him from being just him and a keyboard on stage to appearing with the Northern Sinfonia at The Roval Festival Hall, I saw the arc of his career. That was a miraculous thing to witness. another voice that is inimitable to me." Both Grant and Antony Hegarty give props to Holly. They know he flung open a door of sexual transparency that might otherwise have remained only partially ajar. Holly Johnson

does not think of himself as an icon. "Well, what an insufferable person you'd be if you went around thinking of yourself as an icon." He tries to think of one. "Larry Kramer, now there's an icon," he says.

He's always had an artist's eye for detail. "It's changed somewhat in the modern age. I mean, Judy Garland and Shirley Bassey were the original gay icons and then by default Liza Minelli. Now even Koala Minogue is considered an icon." Because they live not far from one another in West London, Holly spotted Kylie recently. "We have the same optician in the Kings' Road," he notes. "I wouldn't want to intrude on that. And what do I say? You're known as Koala in our house?"

The greatest consistency of Holly's professional life has been away from the stage, at the home he shares with his boyfriend of 31 years, also his manager, Wolfgang Kuhle. Ironically, their rendezvous happened just after Holly's first trip to Ibiza back in 1984. "I met him in Earls Court. I moved from a box room in Knightsbridge to live with him round the corner in West Brompton." He says they have no plans to marry.

There is something forever about Holly Johnson - local, regal, naughty, wonderful fun - that resides at the edges but occasionally barges into polite society. "We would have done, in the 90s," he says of marriage. "When I was very ill and it looked like I wasn't going to make it. I was thrashing about looking for ways of protecting him in the result of my inevitable death, signing over life insurance policies to him, making sure he was the beneficiary of things like that. It did not look good in the early to mid-90s, in terms of legal rights for gay partnerships. That was a terrible period."

He pauses as an impish smile crosses his face. "Anyway, it hasn't happened, so I'm open to proposals now."

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Attitude Award Winner

SEXIEST MAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Liam Payne

WORDS CHRISTIAN GULLTENAN

PHOTOGRAPHY LEIGH KEILY CREATIVE DIRECTION
JOSEPH KOCHARIAN

SUPPORTED BY



We told you about this one last month. All hail One Direction's Liam Payne, the winner of our Sexiest Man of the Year Award. (Sorry, Harry!)

Ah, Liam Payne.
Just ask his 20 million
Twitter followers and they'll
tell you he's the sexiest, most
charismatic, charming man the
world has ever seen. And with
the ferocious loyalty of One
Directioners in mind, who are

we to argue?

Luckily (for our safety), we can say that they are right. When we met the 22-year-old global sensation for our cover shoot last month, we were pleasantly surprised to discover that he was everything

his fans say he is, and more. Liam is hot. He proved it when he hit the beach a year ago, revealing his newly sculpted body. And he proved it on set when we caught a wee glimpse of him changing into his shirt. Not that Liam rates himself. Ask him if he expected to top his 1D mates and he says he's surprised. "It's quite a shock to be honest, and I am very thankful to those who think I deserve this. It's a great title to have, what can I say about that? I'm super happy about it."

attitude

Attitude Award Winner

TV MOMENT OF THE YEAR

James & Austin

The bromance between the breakout stars of Celebrity Big Brother made for the best TV moment of 2015.

WORDS CHRISTIAN GUILTENANE

PHOTOGPAPHY SIMON TAYLOR

hile it's popular for people to sneer at notorious reality
TV show *Big Brother*, it should be remembered that over the past twenty years it has been integral in representing the LGBTI community probably more so than many other programme.

Cast your mind back to series one, which saw Irish lesbian Anna Nolan capture our hearts and and become the show's first winner. A year later, the great British public crowned super sweet trolley dolly Brian Dowling as the victor of the following series. Long before Caitlyn Jenner became the global trans role model we all know and love, viewers embraced Portuguese trans woman Nadia Almada after making her the worthy

GROOMING
HOLLY DAVIES USING MAC

STYLING NICK BYAM

winner of 2005's series.

Big Brother and its celebrity spin off, Celebrity Big Brother, continues to represent all aspects of the community. However, this summer's series of CBB captivated the world through the unlikely but heartwarming relationship between handsome gay hottie Austin Armacost and gorgeous star of The Apprentice James Hill.

A gay guy and straight guy

being mates may
not be a big deal to most,
but watching the pair share
a bed, indulge in 'man tubs'
and enjoy intense personal
conversations, was simply
heart-warming and, in its own
way, progressive. Like a gay
version of When Harry Met Sally,
their platonic relationship
became the subject of much
debate about whether gay
and straight men can really

be just friends. But as time went on James and Austin proved they absolutely could, and this award celebrates the fascinating dynamic between these two very different





men. Never before have gay and straight relationships been studied so deeply by a mainstream audience.

When we meet James and Austin at the plush Andaz Hotel in London for the shoot, just days after they left the house as victor and runner-up respectively, we are pleased to discover that their relationship is just as genuine as it was onscreen. The two hug and giggle like kids. They're hoots! But when we get down to chatting about their special bond, it is clear they realise just how significant their role is in representing sexuality

on TV.

What did you think of each other before you went in?

Austin: When I heard that James was going in the house I looked him up and thought 'wow, he's fit'.

James: Yeah, he'd done his homework on me. He knew every mole on my body. When I first saw him I thought we've got a right one here. I thought we were going to have conflict but we got on like a house on fire

Austin: And we ended up sharing beds. James begged me to share it with him.

What made you both click?

A: He's a Northerner, like my husband Jake.

J: Austin was very forthcoming. He just offered his friendship. He was nice. Austin, would you have been as close if James wasn't so bandsome?

A: Yes, definitely. He is such a great dude on the inside.

What was it about him you liked most?

A: Well, he did my fucking head in, doing his hair and looking in the mirror all the time, but that made laugh.

J: (laughing) And you ran me ragged for four weeks, Austin. I had to put up with not

sleeping, and him talking 100 miles an hour.

A: And because we didn't have a gym, I would lift James up. James, we loved the fact that you had no qualms about sharing a bed with a gay guy. Did you ever stop to think what people would say?

J: No, not at all. You see, the thing is I am 100 per cent sure of my sexuality. I know what I like. And I don't care if someone is gay, straight, bi, lesbian, or whatever. I just love this guy for who he is. We had a great friendship. I didn't look at his sexuality; I just liked him for who he is. He





never crossed the line, he never tried it on. He respected my sexuality and I respected his, and I think that's why we have this amazing friendship.

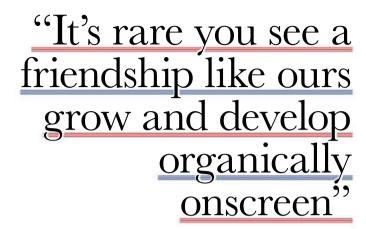
A: And on my part there were two very important barriers between James and I: the fact that he is straight and that I am married.

J: And all Austin did was speak about Jake. And I think it was nice for him to have me there, because with Jake out of the equation he had someone to hang out with. Normally I'm a bit of a loner, and it can be lonely in the house, so it was nice to have someone who had

my back all the time. Although I really became his little slave for four weeks!

It's one of the reasons we fell in love with your relationship...

A: Looking back on it, I think it was important to show how our friendship developed. It's rare you see a friendship like ours grow and develop organically onscreen. It's not really big news to see someone come out of the closet anymore, but to see a straight guy share a bed with a gay guy for 28 days is something else. I never tried to cross the line, he respected me by never saying, 'dude, we're cool, but don't try this'



because he knew I wouldn't do anything.

Farrah questioned the relationship saying that James sharing a bed with Austin must mean he is secretly gay. Did you ever worry about what the public thought?

A: I was shocked by what she said. I had been in the diary room telling BB how much I respected James because he had never had to sit down and say 'it's cool but don't cross the line'. And then I walked out to hear Farrah [Abrahams] and Jenna [James] saying 'James, what's the deal? Is he gonna try and suck your cock?' I was really hurt by that conversation and told James what I had said in the diary room

J: It was narrow-minded of her. At the end of the day, it's 2015. If someone's gay, they're gay. Full stop.

A gay man and a straight man getting so close, enjoying 'man tubs' together and confiding in each other. It's beautiful to us, but strange to her.

J: It's a culture thing. The way Farrah acted stems from her probably never seeing that kind of relationship before in America. For me, I am so comfortable about everything; it's just never an issue. **A:** I can say that 100 per cent

in America this relationship would never have happened. We as viewers really hoped that the girls didn't put a wedge between you two. We didn't want them to ruin things.

J: At that point, I sat him down and said, 'look Austin, I heard what they said, but I'm not bothered. I know who I am, I respect you and you me.'

But there was a point when James lost his temper with you.

A: James really looked out for me, and when I kind of lost it he sat me down and said to me, 'Austin you have let yourself down, you have let me down'. That struck a chord with me and I went into the diary room and totally lost it. You see, I do have some unresolved issues from over the past two years or so. I had only seen my mum for five days when she got out of prison before I went into the house. Because Janice is my mother's age, I think my anger was misplaced and aimed at

Was that your way of getting your anger out of your system? A: Absolutely. And for

someone like James to say





'you've done so well for the last few weeks, you're hurting yourself,' that meant a lot because I knew he cared about me

J: What I like about Austin so much is that he has a heart as big as a bucket. We shared some very personal moments in there; we opened up to each other and that meant a lot to me. I can understand where his anger's coming from. The anger comes from a place of pain. But he has a big heart and that's all that counts.

Did that anger surface because of your mum's time in prison?

A: My brother Tyler got back from Iraq in '08 with a multitude of psychological and physical issues. He couldn't work and was getting 100 bucks from the army. My mum started stealing to support him. Three years before he died he needed back surgery that would have cost \$40,000, but instead they fed him painkillers that cost him 11 cents. And it was because of those pills that he fell asleep at the wheel of his car and died. Mum did 24 months but she's out now. She knows she did wrong; she knows she was gone for two and half years and me and my dad had to deal with that and my brother's death and pick up the pieces on our own. It was hard. And it's still hard but we have a great relationship now. I don't hold any animosity toward her because my brother was in so much pain for the last years of his life, and that little bit of money helped him.

You say gay and straight relationships wouldn't work on American TV, but what's it like in everyday American life?
A: Every time I meet a straight man in America they always

say 'we're cool, as long as you don't hit on me'. Every single time! And I'm like 'you are 350lbs, you got acne, don't worry, you're good'. With my straight mates here in England we share beds all the time.

J: It's what lads do. Even if we stay over at a mate's we stay in the same bed to watch a movie. fames, you have said you get hit on more by gay men than girls. Is that really the case?

J: Yeah, I have had my bum pinched a few times. It's quite flattering.

A: Well, you do have a nice bum!

Have you had any friends come out to you?

J: I find it strange that it's still hard for gay guys to come out and feel like they can be honest. I have this best mate who has been straight forever, and he used to live in Ireland. Then he went quiet for two years. I tried to get hold of him and when I eventually did he told me that he had moved to London because he had wanted to come out and didn't want to upset his friends and family. It was the happiest day of my life because I got my friend back. I got communication again and I said to him 'you're stupid. Why didn't you tell me? I'm still your mate, you're still my friend'. And we're still best friends. When I go to stay at his I share a bed with him. He's as cool as cake.

We think we've come a long way and still some guys find it hard to be true to themselves.

J: I do feel for a lot of people who want to express their sexuality but are scared about the bullying and scared about what people will think. It's sad that that's the world we live in, because we should be able to live our lives the way









"I find it strange that it's still hard for gay guys to come out and be honest"









we want to. Bullying is rife. And it's terrible. I would like to champion and campaign about it. I was bullied at school, because I was seen as someone who was different and wanted do things with my life. We need to be pleased and proud of who we are. Sadly, there are people out there who are insecure and jealous of people who are able to accept who they are and so they bully in retaliation.

Austin, you've said that your coming out was easy...

A: What I find most disturbing is when people say 'should I come out?' and they're told 'oh, it's so much easier to come out'. But that's not always the case. You have to think about the bigger picture. You have to analyse how your friends and family will react. It's not a decision you make lightly. Earlier this year when I did my Attitude shoot, we went to Jake's cousin's 40th birthday, and had a great time with his family. Six weeks later Jake received an email from this

particular person we had met saying 'I just want to thank vou and Austin, because vou both have totally changed my life. I had planned to stay in the closet forever, but seeing you interact with your family and being so accepted by them helped me make the decision to come out'. And that's why I try to be as open as possible without even knowing it, you can change people's lives. J: That's why high profile celebs like Elton John can make such a difference. Being a celeb is like being a role model, and responsibility comes with that.

That's why your relationship is so important. There are young guys out there who see a straight guy and a gay guy forge this amazingly close and platonic friendship – it's so important to be able to show this kind of bond.

A: Indeed. The show is over and what we do with his platform is what will make the difference and will define us. Moving forward there's still much work to be done in America. We have marriage everywhere in the US, but in some states you can still be fired for being gay - you are not protected under the Civil Rights Act. That's my next goal - to have gays and lesbians protected by that. The thing is, I am an activist, I am not a law maker, so I can be more abrasive with the opponents. I don't have to have discussion. I can scream in their fucking face! I describe myself as kamikazestyle activist. The first step to advocating is educating, so I try to tell my story as much as I can. I don't want people thinking gay men are grooming young men or that we're all drug addicts. It's important for people to know that I have been married for eight years. We don't have threesomes or do drugs. We party but at the end of the day we're an just an old-fashioned couple, like any other.

fames Hill's 2016 calendar is available to buy at celebritymerchandise.co.uk



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INDUITE A

Attitude Award Winner STYLE HERO

Vivienne Westwood

The doyenne of British fashion, this outspoken designer defines what it truly means to be iconic.

SUPPORTED BY

WORDS JOSEPH KOCHARIAN



he undisputed grande dame of British Fashion (as well as being an actual dame too) Vivienne Westwood has been causing anarchy on the catwalk for decades. An environmental activist, Vivienne uses her exposure through her fashion shows to articulate her political beliefs, demonstrating that fashion can be much more than clothes. Dame Westwood is vocal about tackling climate change and, clad with a megaphone, has led marches against fracking in the capital city. Most recently, she drove a tank to David Cameron's house to protest it.

Vivienne has sent men down the runway wearing fake breasts and spearheaded an Ethical Fashion Africa collection, which employed thousands of local women to make bags, ensuring that they earned a fair wage in return. Westwood has kept her bonds to Britain tight. Plenty of union jacks, nods to Queen Elizabeth (both current and Tudor) and capsule collections constantly display her love for London and Britain. She has designed for the English National Ballet and launched a capsule collection to celebrate the Queen's diamond jubilee.

A designer at the inception of the modern punk and new wave, she helped shape the aesthetic of the era. Full of tartans and safety pins, her clothing screams out at you. It's bold and ostentatious and never for the wallflower.

Dame Westwood manages to evolve her designs and constantly innovate as fashion changes. Her fire is still burning as bright as it did when she started back in the 70s, and shows no sign of diminishing. God save the queen of British fashion.



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Attitude Award Winner
ICON AWARD

April April Ashley

In 1960, at the age of 25, April Ashley became one of the first British people to undergo sex reassignment surgery. Now, at 80, the grande dame looks back on a truly iconic life.

WORDS: PARIS LEES SUPPORTED BY



ack in the 1960s you could count the number of trans people in public life on one, perfectly manicured hand - France had the beautiful performer Coccinelle and America had the celebrated memoirist Christine Jorgenson, but in the UK, for many years, for many people, April Ashley was the only trans person they'd ever heard of. She became one of the first Britons to undergo genital reconstruction surgery in the 1960s and, a few years later, was outed by the tabloids at the height of her modelling career. To say she's been around the block would be putting it lightly. "I had to go through six weeks of electric shock treatment as a teenager, which in those days was very primitive," she recalls

today, in perfect BBC English. "Your eyeballs bled." Say hello to the grande dame of 20th Century transgenderism.

"We came from the docks of Liverpool and we were extraordinarily poor," says April of her humble beginnings. "I was an 'it', because everyone would say 'What is it?' In the end my mother was so fed up she wouldn't even answer people." She describes her mother as evil beyond words: "She was threatened with prison because there were so many wounds on my body from all the beltings that I got."

April didn't get much love from the rest of her family, either. "I decided I'm never going to have a family of my own, so I might as well make my friends my family." Her father was the only person who was kind to her, but he was away at sea most of time: "He was torpedoed in the war and had to go into a convalescent home for two years. Next time I saw him he was dying. He said 'Darling, I always knew'. He loved me."

She joined the navy at 15 but seafaring wasn't for her and she returned to Liverpool a few years later: "I met all these gay boys and I thought they were just marvellous. One of them was called Rodney and he used to have a pot of green eyeshadow on each eye – I'd never seen anything like it in my life. I thought they were the most wonderful people on earth."

April knew she wasn't like her new gay friends though. "One evening I saw a young couple so in love and I thought, well, as much as I love the boys, I don't want to have that sort of life. And on the other hand I'm never going to have what a young man and woman have, so I thought, well, that's it, I'll just jump in the river. And I did."

She survived, but suicide attempts weren't met with tea and sympathy in those days. Instead she was put in a 'lunatic asylum' and tied to the bed. "There were people screaming their heads off; it was horrendous." Then came the electric shock treatment and cruelty that Alan Turing would have recognised. "They gave me every drug under the sun. They gave me male hormones for a year until they said 'we're





making you physically ill. You'll just have to go out into the world and make what you can out of it'." Soon after, she was raped. "Oh ves," she recalls. "And that was by a friend."

If it sounds horrific that's because it was. This, sadly, was the reality for many gay and trans people in Britain - and still is in many places around the world. Luckily for April, though, her luck was about to change. Young and beautiful, she decided to set off to Paris and become a cabaret star. "That was a marvellous experience, I loved it there."

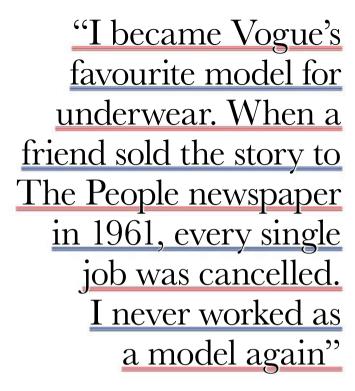
She spent a few happy years in France, but ultimately she had bigger ambitions. "The moment I discovered it was possible to have

an operation I saved every penny. It was just over £3,000, which was an awful lot of money in those days, and off I went, alone. I knew that if I didn't become a woman I didn't want to live." What happened next is the stuff of legend. "Just as the anesthetist was putting the needle in my arm the surgeon said 'Au revoir Monsieur', and when I woke up he said 'Bonjour Mademoiselle'."

The good life seemed close. "When I became a model I was terribly happy," she says. She landed a part in the Hollywood movie Road to Hong Kong, although the producers edited her out when they discovered she was trans. There was worse ahead, "I had about six months of absolutely marvellous work; I became Vogue's favourite model for underwear. When a friend sold the story to The People newspaper in 1961, every single job was cancelled. I never worked as a model again."

Years of prejudice followed. "A very elegant woman once slapped me so hard I had her fingers imprinted on my face for three days." People even spat at her. "They were always trying to touch my breasts to see if they

She did, however, marry - in what would become one of the



most discussed marriages of the 1960s. Her husband, Arthur Corbett, was set to become a Lord, but this was no fairvtale wedding and April ended their dysfunctional relationship soon after they'd tied the knot. She was humiliated in the divorce case. "I said to my legal team, 'This judge won't even look me in the face when he's asking me a direct question'." The court declared the marriage void on the grounds that April was 'legally male', setting a precedent that prevented trans people from marrying in Britain for over 30

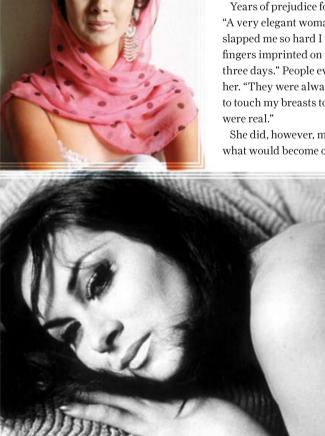
I doubt there's a trans person in the UK who hasn't read April's story, and her struggles were a source of inspiration during my own gender transition. "It hasn't been an easy life but my father would say to me, 'Darling you are on this planet to enhance it and if anyone's nasty to you, never, ever remember their names. And never, ever be bitter, because the only person bitterness hurts is you'."

What would April change about her past? "I'd be born just a normal person." Really? "Yes. And I wouldn't care if it was a boy or a girl. As long as I could spend a normal life."

In recent years April has come to be honoured as a pioneer - gaining the keys to the city of Liverpool and receiving an MBE from the Queen. But what does this iconic lady have to say about why her life has been an inspiration for generations of people? "I just think it's because I've always been very dignified and never hidden away."

She may be dignified, but at 80, she is nobody's fool. "A few years ago I was asked me to be in a very expensive magazine. They said 'We're doing a cover story and we want you to kiss Kate Moss'. I said 'I'd be sick, but what is the fee?' They said, 'No fee'. I said, 'No fee? No me! What are you paying Miss Moss? Tens of thousands of pounds?'

'Oh yes, but she's Kate Moss'. And I curtly replied 'Yes. And I'm April Ashley'."



Beauty like this needs to be shared.

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MEDIA RECOGNITION AWARD

The X Factor

Simon Cowell, Cheryl and the gang are worthy winners of Attitude's Media Recognition Award.

hen you think of *The X Factor* you think of the crazy sounds of Chico, or Wagner, or that deluded 'chicken man' who sang an awfully high-pitched rendition of *Barbie Girl*. But let's not forget about the wonderful talents that have been unearthed over the years.

Leona Lewis's voice still manages to thrill and chill us, while series two winner Shayne Ward not only dazzled us with his soft pop vocals, but his dashing handsome looks too. And do we need to mention One Direction?

But what *The X Factor* has also done – and why *Attitude* has decided to give the series a Media Recognition Award – is showcase many talented LGBT singers. Remember Joe McElderry, the softly spoken angelic Geordie who won series six? Although he kept quiet about his sexuality during the series, once it concluded he revealed he was gay. Big ups have to also go to the openly gay Rylan Clark, who entertained

us with his flamboyant performances; drag queen Johnnie Robinson, who had viewers in stitches as he minced his way through his performances; lesbian singer-songwriter Lucy Spraggan, who had us chuckling with her witty ditties, and many more. One of the most notable moments was when midway through series nine, Javmi Hensley of boyband

WORDS CHRISTIAN GUILTENANE

Union J came out without any fuss.

And the current series has already thrown up a handful of varied LGBT talent including the very unique Seann Miley Moore, who auditioned in a leather skirt and admitted: "Music has allowed me to be me. If it makes you feel happy and right then do it." Amen! Catch *The X Factor* on ITV Sundays at 7pm.

David Fisher, James Shaw, Jonathan Hordle / REX Shutterstock



Attitude Award Winner

GREATEST MOMENT OF THE YEAR AWARD

Ireland Votes YES To Same Sex Marriage

Awarded to the 1,201,607 people who voted Yes to same-sex marriage

WORDS: BEN KELLY

here was never any question that the stand out LGBT moment of 2015 was Ireland's historic decision to pass same-sex marriage by referendum, becoming the first country in the world to do so.

The national vote was necessary in order to change the republic's constitution; altering the

definition of marriage so that it 'may be contracted in accordance with law by two persons without distinction as to their sex'. As anticipated, the campaign was fairly heated. With all of Ireland's political parties supporting a Yes vote, and the No campaign led largely by the Church, it looked very much like modern

liberalism taking on the status quo of religious establishment. Though a Yes voted seemed the likely outcome, a shock result in the British General Election weeks earlier gave many supporters cold feet.

But by the time polling day came around, the country was gripped by positive, hopeful enthusiasm, and from the moment the first ballot boxes were opened at 9am on Saturday 23 May, it was clear the Yes campaign had won, meaning celebrations began long before the official announcement that evening.

Of the near 2 million people who voted, a massive 62% voted Yes. It's no exaggeration to say it was one of the greatest days in the history of Ireland – a country which prides itself on equality for all citizens – and remarkable images were broadcast around the globe. Panti Bliss took selfies with Gerry Adams, Senator Katherine Zappone proposed to her female partner live on air, and before the night was out, the Catholic Archbishop of

Dublin conceded that the Church needed to face "a reality check", as their pleas for a No vote were disregarded by a country they had once dominated.

Perhaps the most poignant element of the referendum day was the #HomeToVote campaign, which saw thousands of the Irish diaspora travelling back to make their voices heard. Social media was awash with buses, boats and planes full of Irish people armed with their passports and rainbow flags. They literally went the extra miles to put into practice the equality that nowadays is so easily preached online.

Same-sex marriage was not achieved in Ireland purely by political will, but by popular consensus. So, this award is given to the 1,201,607 people who voted Yes on 22 May. In doing so they repositioned Ireland as a thoroughly modern country, with an admirable moral compass. Their advocacy of equality may have come from a small island, but it rang out loudly to a world slowly realising that the tide of marriage equality is unstoppable.

Committee / DEV Ch. steader al.



Attitude Award Winner
HONORARY GAY AWARD

Lorraine Kelly

Television presenter and journalist Lorraine Kelly continues to enjoy a successful career that already spans thirty years. Her daytime talkshow, *Lorraine*, has provided a platform for LGBT people to share their stories.

WORDS: PARIS LEES

orraine Kelly is giggling.
"I don't know, I think
my show is quite gay
sometimes." Really, Lozza? "I
think it's quite gay every day.
Who have we got on? Oh, we've
got Judge Rinder on – he's quite
gay. And Dan Wootton's on
talking about showbiz. We've
got Will Young on the day after
that." Has anyone ever called
her a fag hag before? "Oh god,
yeah, loads!" She much prefers
'Honorary Gay', though. "I can
retire now. My life is complete".

It might be cliched to call Lorraine the Queen of Daytime TV, but she is. Undisputed. And after 30 years in the business, she's also become one of Britain's cult gay icons. "It's funny," she chuckles, "my

friends think it's fantastic!" She's always had gay friends but for her "they were just pals who happened to be gay." Perhaps it's no surprise, then, that her show has always been a broad church and, oftentimes, one of the campest things on telly. "I've always said, whoever comes on my show, everybody gets treated the same. I don't understand why anybody would get treated differently just because of their sexuality or their religion or their colour or whatever."

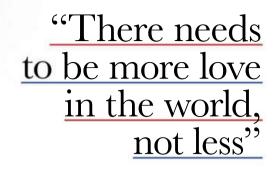
Lorraine's trademark mixture of kindness, warmth and irrepressible positivity are key to her ongoing success in an industry that doesn't hand out 30-year careers to women on plates. And she's a hard worker, too. She left school at 17 and landed a job at her local newspaper instead of going to university. "It's what I'd always wanted to do, and then a few years later I got a job as a researcher at the BBC."

In 1984 she became a reporter at TV AM. "It's been a really good grounding," she says, "because although an awful lot of what we do on the show now is quite magaziney and lifestyle, it doesn't mean that we won't tackle a serious issue." Before the election she interviewed all the main political leaders. "I think sometimes they're quite disarmed with me; maybe their guard is down a little bit. Piers Morgan said that I'm an iron fist

in a fluffy glove."

She bursts into laughter when asked about the gayest thing she's ever done. "Well, one time I danced to Abba on stage at The Fridge wearing a tiara and sparkly gown". So far, so gay. "And when I was really young one of my real good pals Gary used to throw mad parties, and if you weren't wearing the right dress code, he would literally cut your trousers to make them into shorts if it was a barbeque! Then he'd wrap himself in a sheet and sing I Don't Know How to Love Him from Jesus Christ Superstar." There's more. "Then there was the time we had to wear swimming costumes and walk down the road with him! Oh my god, we'd laugh so much.





And it was all to the soundtrack of Grace Jones."

Gay friends are all well and good, but welcoming gay and trans guests on her show is what makes Lorraine an important friend to the entire community. For her, it's all about celebrating people's stories. "To be honest, it's all down to people who are willing to come on my show and share their stories and spread the word. You have to make them comfortable because at the end of the day it's about them, it's not about me. It's about making sure they get their story out, making sure that they know they've done a good job. And that's very, very important to me."



"Piers Morgan said that I'm an iron fist in a fluffy glove"

Dan Wootton and John Whaite are regulars on her show, and over the past year she's had trans DJ Stephanie Hirst handing out advice as a mentor. "The focus really was just about her being able to help somebody else – that person wasn't even trans. She was just somebody who needed a bit of confidence."

Lorraine knows the difference media representation can make to minorities and was devastated when Hayley died in *Coronation Street*. "It was like losing somebody I love! I think Hayley made a massive difference, I really do. Everybody just loved her. People said 'well, she's just like everybody else' and you go 'well, duh'. So it's taken us a show to show us that."

She loves the BBCs new transthemed comedy *Boy Meets Girl* and says Caitlyn Jenner is part of a new awareness. "What a long way to have come! It's unfortunate that until quite recently, sadly, most stories about trans people had been tragedies. We're now in this place where we're saying, 'yeah, you do have to go through a tough time, but actually it's OK. It gets better'."

Yes, she knows about It Gets Better. She is, after all, an honorary gay. "I remember having a conversation with my daughter after we'd watched something on TV and she was like 'what, it was illegal?' – I went, 'do you know what, it was illegal when I was alive. When I was a kid, it was illegal to be gay' – and she just couldn't get her head around it. You say that to young people, even young gay people, and it's just so utterly ridiculous. They can't believe in the 60s that that was still happening. It really shows the progress we've made."

She's modest about her own contribution to social change though and says it's all about the guests. "Whenever we have a trans person on, for example, we always have a really good reaction and people saving 'you've really helped me'. It's important for people in the same boat and it's important for everybody else to, I don't know, just realise that we're all the bloody same! We really are. We all just want to be happy and find somebody to love. That's why I just get completely baffled sometimes. Like when people object to gay marriage, for example. I just don't get it. I don't understand. There needs to be more love in the world. not less."

Lorraine airs weekdays at 8:30am on ITV





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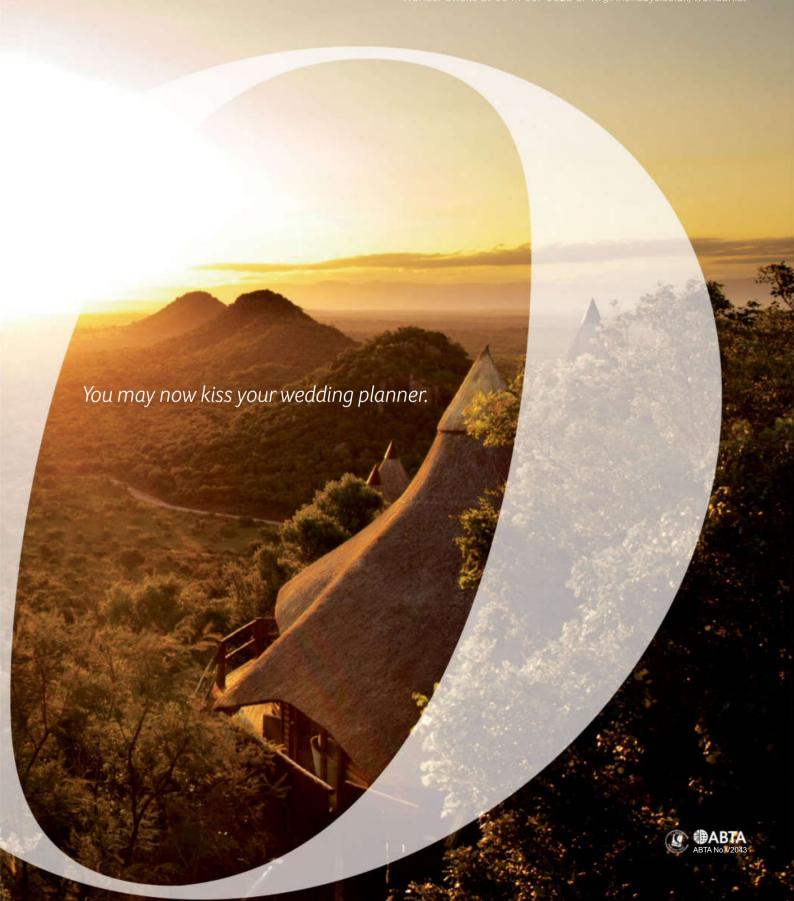
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his year's Young LGBT
Entrepreneur Award goes
to two very dashing young
brothers from France who
came up with the clever idea of
creating a career-networking
site specifically for the LGBT
community.

MyGWork.com allows LGBT men and women to search for jobs with employers who promote a diverse and LGBTinclusive environment. It also includes a forum for users to share their experiences and advice with other professionals, as well as giving its members a chance to network via direct messaging, attend networking and career events and keep up to date with the latest LGBT professional news.

The idea came after the boys both experienced homophobia in their individual work places. "I worked for a large software vendor in Madrid where I suffered direct bullying from my superiors," Pierre tells us.
"One of them asked if I was a
faggot to which I replied, 'if
you're asking if I am gay, then
yes, I am'. It then turned into a
situation where they thought it
was appropriate to make sexual
jokes. This experience really
affected me and my ability to
feel at ease in the office."

Adrien's experience left a nasty taste in his mouth. "I had colleagues gossiping about me when I was working for the foreign office in China. Some colleagues knew about my sexuality but would still ask if I had a girlfriend. There were two options for me; lying and be treated as straight, or come out and run the risk of not being accepted as gay. I did choose to come out but was often subject to comments and stereotypes."

The company, which launched earlier this year, has been something of a labour of love. "Our platform is self-funded. We used the money our mother left us when she passed away two years ago. She was always worried about the issues we could face in the professional world because of our sexual orientation. MyGwork is a way to make her proud and reassure LGBT people that there's a safe environment for them."

Pierre adds, "We've been very fortunate in that we have had a lot of help. We can't be thankful enough for the all the support and advice we have received from our business advisors, friends and other professionals that believed in myGwork."

And while the format is in its infancy, the boys aren't scared to encourage other young entrepreneurs to follow suit and bring their business dreams to fruition.

"Starting a business alone is like being a single parent," Pierre explains. "You may succeed but the road will be bumpier. We advise young entrepreneurs to find someone to share their journey with, whether that is through direct partnership or just asking a friend for help and advice when needed. Going into business can be stressful and is a huge commitment, but can be rewarding and a joy at the same time."

mygwork.com













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Attitude Award Winner ACTIVE AWARD

England Women's National Football Team

The England Women's National Football team proved their prowess this year at the 2015 Fifa Women's World Cup in Canada.

WORDS: BEN KELLY SUPPORTED BY

BUSN

tereotyping and prejudice are two of the greatest barriers faced by the LGBT community, but of course they rear their heads in other walks of life too. We know all too well the stereotype that football is a sport for boys, and the prejudice that women just won't be very good at it. All of this was blown out of the water this year by the England Women's National Football Team when they competed at the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup in Canada.

For a team that has never before got further than the quarter-finals, their spectacular dash to the semi-finals captured the attention of both football fans, and those who ordinarily pay the sport no attention at all. After countless disappointments from their male counterparts, suddenly these girls had got further than any England team at a World Cup for 25 years, proving their mettle on the world stage, and giving us all something to throw our support behind.

Finishing third may have been somewhat bittersweet – so close and yet so far – but the message their success sent back home to Britain was a powerful one which stripped away the expectations and restrictions of gender. The girls can do football, and dare we say it, they do it better than the boys.

Some people need renovation or retouching, some are pretty perfect apparently, some are in need of a polish and some are just as found.



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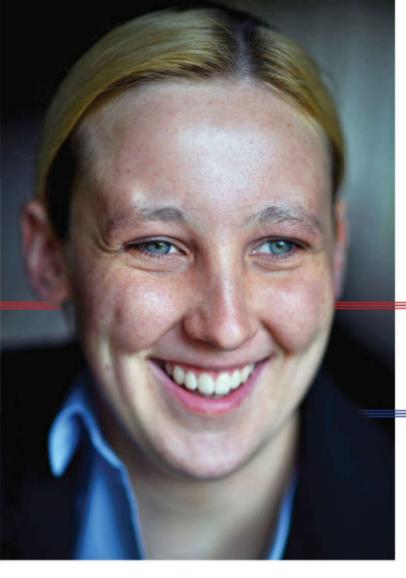
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Attitude Award Winner
POLITICIAN OF THE YEAR AWARD

Mhairi Black

The youngest MP in 200 years is a proud member of the LGBT community and a champion for social equality

WORDS: BEN KELLY

fall the political surprises that came with this year's General Election, it was one of the SNP's 56 victories which captured the public's attention most. Mhairi Black was just 20 years and 237 days old when she took the Paisley and Renfrewshire South seat from Labour's Shadow Foreign Secretary Douglas Alexander. Though the lines have moved over time, she is known to be the youngest MP since at least 1832.

Black is one of the SNP's seven MPs who identify as LGBTI – a strong percentage that is perhaps unsurprising in a party which has put the rights of minorities at the heart of its ethos, and hosted the largest ever political LGBT conference in February. Indeed

the 2015 intake on the whole has more gay, lesbian and bisexual MPs than ever before – an estimated 32 – which is also more than any other parliament in the world.

Less than two weeks into the job, Black joined an SNP group in a photo call outside the Houses of Parliament calling for a Yes vote in Ireland's same-sex marriage referendum. When asked about her decision to come out, she casually replied, "I've never been in." Here, she echoed the sentiments of an entire generation who have grown up with the benefit of a more tolerant and equal society, where coming out is less of a thing, and being gay is less of an issue.

And yet being the 'Baby of the House' has its pitfalls –

she has had her social media raked through so hungry hacks could dig up youthful misdemeanours, though her tweets about football rivalries and alcopops are positively innocent compared with the student antics of some of the more senior members of the House.

Indeed, if there were any lingering scoffs or eyebrows yet raised about her age, they were monumentally dismissed when she gave her maiden speech on 14 July, just one month after graduating from the University of Glasgow. In it she attacked the country's reliance on food banks, spoke of a man in her constituency who had to go hungry to afford a trip to the Job Centre (only to be sanctioned for getting there

late), and pointed out that as an MP, she is the only 20-yearold in the country receiving help with her housing costs.

Her powerful, eloquent address has since been viewed over 10 million times across various media platforms, giving substance to the excitement generated around her election. It is a true mark of our changing society that as the media marvelled at the content of her speech, her sexuality was, at most, barely mentioned.

Even if she did nothing else (which is highly unlikely), the mere fact of Mhairi Black's election is an inspiration to an entire generation of young people – LGBT or not – who are in dire need of organic, hard working talents to look up to and emulate, and for that she is *Attitude*'s Politician of the Year.

2015 (20#1)



Attitude Award Winner
ALLY AWARD

Reggie Yates

This year, BBC3 screened a documentary series that shed light on what life is like in 21st century Russia. The second episode of *Extreme Russia* exposed the hatred and violence that the country's LGBT citizens face following the introduction of anti-LGBT laws in 2013. Presenter and Attitude Ally Award winner Reggie Yates discusses what it was like filming the documentary series, his personal connection to the LGBT community and what comes next...

WORDS KEVIN LONG PHOTOGRAPHY JOSEPH SINCLAIR FASHION NICK BYAM

hen I speak to Reggie Yates over the phone he is overjoyed and surprised at being named the recipient of the Ally Award at this year's Attitude Awards. "I'm so proud and excited," the 32-year-old north Londoner exclaims. "It's an incredible honour to receive this award. To make programmes that matter is one thing, but to make programmes that resonate with the audience that you're discussing is the most

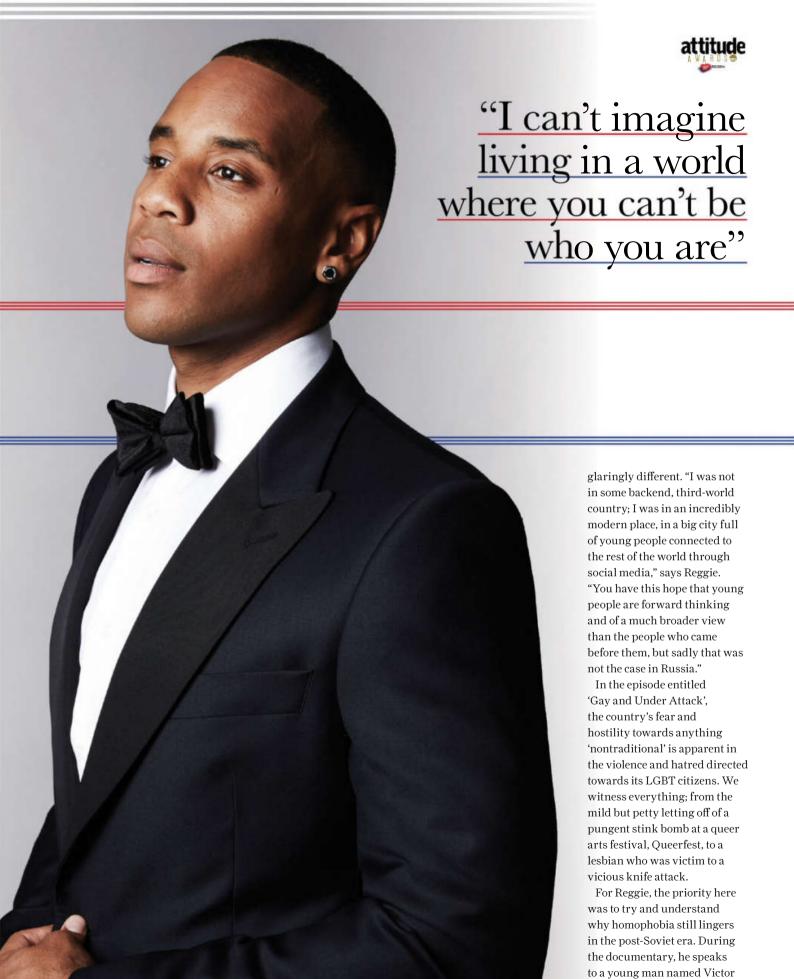
gratifying aspect."

He should be pleased. His most recent documentary series for BBC Three, *Extreme Russia*, garnered much buzz in the press and on social media after shedding light on modern day Russian society, culture and politics and showed a new side to the DJ and presenter. The three-part series focused on everything from the country's extreme nationalism and xenophobia, to its teen modelling industry,

to its appalling treatment of the LGBT community. The latter in particular made for distressing viewing.

Despite perceptions of Russia as a cold, stark landscape which Western modernity has yet to reach, in reality it's much like a European metropolis, with pretty streets decorated with quaint cafes, bookshops and bars. In nearly every aspect, Moscow is much like Berlin, London or Prague, yet when it comes to social attitudes it's

Reggie wears tuxedo by Gieves & Hawkes at Mr Porter, shirt by Brioni at Mr Porter, bow tie by M&S Collection







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who equates homophobia with patriotism and what it means to be a true Russian. "There is this blurring of cultural views and quite scary archaic views, and that's what Victor is; someone who is entrenched in this idea of what it means to be a real Russian man. He's also desperate to preserve Russian culture, and for him part of that is not to be a homosexual."

At another stage during the episode, we meet three members of a pressure group named God's Will. They're all young, in their early-to-mid twenties, yet they display a shockingly poisonous attitude towards gay men. Their perception of homosexuality is 'standing for having someone's penis in your anus'. As Reggie desperately tries to understand why they feel the way they do, the conversation continues to spiral down as the trio casually agree to stoning homosexuals to death if the law allowed it.

But why is Russia so far behind the West when it comes to LGBT equality? "I think Russia's fear of the Western world definitely plays a part," says Reggie. "The attitudes towards anything from the West are that it's totally not in keeping with anything that is Russian. Unfortunately from their point of view, homosexuality is part of that. It's something that is accepted in the West, so therefore it becomes a Western thing that has no place in Russian society." This attitude feeds into the current frosty relations between Russia and the rest of the world. Under Putin's grip, the country has continued to be subservient to the almost God-like sense of authority that its leading figures are granted.



"You have this hope that young people are forward-thinking, but sadly that was not the case in Russia"

Reggie agrees. "I think it would be a very different scenario if Putin wasn't in charge. Politics and culture merge, and to be a supporter of Putin you are just as traditional as you are political. The way the media is delivered and the amount of control the government has over it directly affects the way people think."

Extreme Russia documented the effect of the introduction of the laws in late 2013 that made it illegal to promote 'non traditional sexual relations' to minors. It has propelled homophobia in the country and forced same-sex couples to hide their relationships.

We're introduced to Vanya and Nusrella during the documentary, a young gay couple that wouldn't look out of place walking the streets of Soho in London. When Reggie speaks to them he learns of how Russia's harsh LGBT climate has forced them into inventing fake girlfriends on their social media accounts to deter any suspicion towards their true identities. "It was heartbreaking talking to those two. They were really sweet and reminded me of some of my friends here in London, from the way they dressed to their cultural references." It is here that Reggie touches on what made the documentary so successful with viewers and stirred discussion online. "I can't imagine living in a world where you can't be who you are. It was difficult to see as had Vanya and Nusrella been born in a different country, their lives would have been a lot different. And that's the sad truth of it all."

Through their story, and the stories of all the other brave people featured, Extreme Russia brought the kind of emotion and humanity to the plight of Russia's LGBT community that's lacking in media reports. It reached beyond the young demographic of BBC Three, following repeats on BBC One right after the 10pm news. "There is massive condescension when it comes to programmes catered towards younger audiences. But if you're making something for young people and you talk straight and provide context, it will resonate with a broader audience," he affirms.

For Reggie, who has been in the entertainment industry

Just Be Ku

LONDON'S AWARD WINNING GAY VENUES

for the best part of twenty-five years already, the *Extreme* series showcased just how versatile his presenting talents are. His natural magnetism and friendly demeanour has seen him become something of a stalwart for the BBC, who have commissioned another addition to the series to air sometime next year, though this time it will document the UK. "The first episode is on misogyny, feminism and this idea of the 'manosphere' and how that fits into what it means to be a man," says Reggie. "The playing field is massively different now for this generation of men, especially when it comes to relationships with women. We explore that with some very interesting characters - from pick up artists, to trolls, to men who are completely redefining masculinity in 2015."

The next series will also explore what it's like to be black, British and gay. "It's the whole idea of Afro-Caribbean communities and their acceptance and non-acceptance of it, and the role of religion in shaping views. As a West African man with a gay brother, I can definitely speak from personal experience on what it means to be that. It's going to be a fantastic one to watch."

It's not the first time Reggie has covered race. He visited Ferguson a year on after the death of Michael Brown in *Race Riots UK* for BBC Three.

Does he ever experience

doubt before diving into such controversial topics? "I'm not the bravest man in the world; I'm not a superhero, but I am someone who believes that if there's something to bring awareness to, I have the platform to do that. For me, it's all about getting to the truth of why someone thinks and acts the way they do. And that's the case across the Extreme documentaries. Behaviour is learned, and if you're going to behave in a way that's shocking and extreme what I'm interested in is where that behaviour comes from."

Whether or not focusing on homosexuality in the UK will pack the same punch as the Russia series, the episode will undoubtedly provoke discussion around the contentious relationship between religion and homosexuality, and the greater difficulty some black men and women have in coming out as gay, bisexual, lesbian or transgender. "I just really hope that these series will continue to inspire some really interesting conversations between young people and their parents, whether it's about sexuality or violence or misogyny or whatever. That's what it's all about for me. The programmes that I'm making are challenging people and opening people's minds up to a different way of life, or a life that they haven't been aware of. That's what I've always wanted to do."



Extreme UK will air in 2016. See Reggie on ITV2's game show Release the Hounds, Wednesdays

"Behaviour is learned, and if you're going to behave in a way that's shocking and extreme what I'm interested in is where that behaviour comes from"?



lan Cumming is a natural born storyteller. He's already well known for his work as an actor, whether it's in films as diverse as GoldenEye, Romy and Michele's High School Reunion or Spice World, in his starring role as Eli Gold on TV's The Good Wife, or in his native environment on the stage - where he is well known for his celebrated one man Macbeth, and for his legendary, twice revived run as the Emcee in Sam Mendes' production of Cabaret.

In his near 35 year career, Alan has won an Olivier Award, a Tony Award, and a GLAAD Media Award, among countless others, but this year *Attitude* is honouring him not for his acting, but for his literary effort, *Not My Father's Son* – a compelling memoir exploring his strained relationship with his father which is our Book of the Year.

The backdrop of the book sees Alan filming his Who Do You Think You Are episode for BBC, which sets out to discover the story of his maternal grandfather, who disappeared to the Far East after the Second World War. But in the midst of filming, Alan is contacted by his estranged father, who throws doubt on his very paternity, provoking a double voyage of self discovery. Alan attempts to solve one family mystery on screen, while unlocking an even more earth shattering one in his real life.

In frequent flashbacks, Alan

frankly recalls anecdotes from his troubled Scottish upbringing about his father's infidelity, the physical abuse he inflicted on his son, or the psychological torture he exerted over Alan's mother. It's a hard read, but as the adult Alan attempts to restructure his feelings, the reader shares in his bravery, and celebrates quietly in his private triumph.

Speaking to Attitude around

the book's release, Alan said, "One of the great things I've realised since it came out is that it's quite an inspiring story. People in situations they feel they may not be able to overcome can realise that it is always possible. It's all about your own belief and using your moral compass."

Indeed if there's a scenario we know all too well in the LGBT world, it's trouble with fathers, and while Alan's issues aren't specific to his sexuality, his predicament is one with which many readers can identify. You can read *Not My Father's Son* fairly quickly – indeed it's hard

to put down once you've begun - but Alan's powerful story is one which stays with the reader long after the final page has been read.

Out Now





BREAKTHROUGH PERFORMANCE

Rebecca Root

The stand-up comedian and actress has become one of the few leading trans women on mainstream television with Boy Meets Girl.

air and balanced representations of trans characters have been a long time coming on mainstream television. Certainly we've had reality TV stars, but as in many other walks of life, our trans brothers and sisters are way behind us in terms of the diversity of their on screen portrayals.

But a real moment was

reached this year with the arrival of Boy Meets Girl, a sitcom on BBC Two about a trans character called Judy who is, crucially, played by a trans actress, Rebecca Root. Very simply, it follows her budding relationship with a younger man called Leo, and explores the trials and tribulations of their dating experience (with a bit of our pal Denise Welch

thrown in for good measure).

The BBC commissioned Boy Meets Girl after launching the Trans Comedy Award in 2013, which actively sought scripts with positive portrayals of transgender characters - something for which we applaud them. But our award goes to Root herself, for her warm, funny, and relatable performance, which

WORDS: BEN KELLY

hopefully goes some way towards remoulding how the British public perceive trans people and the issues that affect them. As well as doing stand up comedy, Rebecca is a vocal coach who teaches at the East 15 Acting School. We're thrilled that 2015 saw her breakthrough into public consciousness in such a groundbreaking show.



Attitude Award Winner COMMUNITY AWARD

ean reet

Sexual health and wellbeing clinic 56 Dean Street has revolutionised sexual services and become a pioneer in LGBT care and HIV awareness, both across the UK and internationally.

WORDS PATRICK CASH PHOTOS LEON CSERNOHLAVEK

EDITOR'S NOTE We decided to award 56 Dean Street the Community Award before the data leak which occurred in September. They provide innovative services which are pivotal to the health of gay people in central London and indeed, with their 'wellbeing programme', are at the forefront of dealing with the significant drugs problem in gay London. We believe they save lives on a daily basis, and because of this still deserve this award. Matthew Todd, Editor.

> ex has long been the currency of Soho. Both gay and straight brothels have lined its streets for centuries, and when homosexuality was illegal us 'sodomites' found our secret drinking dens in the quarter. But where people come together to seek and share pleasure can spread not so desired gifts. Soho's first clinic to treat venereal disease was opened in 1862, on a road named Dean Street.

Today, aside from its vibrant gay village, there are only faint glimpses of Soho's glorious, tainted past amongst the media companies and gastropubs. Yet Dean Street is still world famous for sex - or more accurately, for

innovations in sexual health. Innovations that are often tailor created for the vast gay community of London.

56 Dean Street, opened in 2009, is Europe's busiest sexual health centre. 11,000 patients use its services each month, 7,000 of whom are gay men. Part of its success is in its pioneering design. Unlike the 'Cinderella' sexual health services of the past, shoved away at the back of the hospital near the chapel, the Dean Street clinic resembles a boutique hotel: sparkling, light-filled and modern. But, as many of us on the gay scene will know, however good something might look means little without a

supporting personality.

Leigh Chislett is the clinic manager who leads a hardworking, friendly staff, many of them LGBT themselves. Joe Phillips is his second-incommand. "At 56 Dean Street we're proud to provide sexual health and HIV care to the gay community," says Joe. "All our staff, including those that don't identify as being part of the community, try to go the extra mile to care for and support the people we see."

These extra miles include outreach services, like instant HIV testing in the basement of G-A-Y, or offering hepatitis vaccinations at Ku Bar. And specialist weekly clinics like CODE and CliniQ: the first devoted to helping men struggling with chemsex in the capital, and the second only sexual health service specifically for transgender people in the UK.



testing and blood tests. Its popularity has been immediate, making getting a sexual health check-up as quick and easy as getting a new haircut.

But perhaps one of the most







first forum out of London, at Liverpool's Homotopia.

"56 Dean Street offers the perfect platform for gay and bi men to come together to discuss our wellbeing in 2015," says Simon Marks, host of A Change of Scene. "Essentially, A Change of Scene is about giving the community back its voice and being heard. In the heart of it all, 56 Dean Street is there, serving each and every one of us beyond our sexual health, offering a vital and safe space to just be."

The biggest evidence of how the gay community feels about Dean Street came when the clinic needed it most: during its recent media coverage. An email to recipients of a newsletter was accidentally 'copied' rather than 'blind copied'. Whilst there was negative media coverage of the incident, the tone on social media was different, "56 Dean Street have always given us their love and support," wrote HIV activist Greg Owen. "Now they need it back." The following Wednesday, a huge cohort of patients turned up at the clinic with cakes they had baked for the staff.

There are exciting future developments at Dean Street, including the launch of a new PrEP clinic to make the HIV prevention drug available to the gay community at a close to cost price.

But finally, my second vested interest, I recently wrote a play based on the clinic named *The Clinic*. It actually originated from a Dean Street Wellbeing event and, without honking my own horn, it was successful. Because the stories of Dean Street are the stories of our community: the sex, the chems, the apps, the HIV and risks. But ultimately, the greatest story Dean Street tells is one of care and love.

interesting developments in Dean Street's repertoire is the Dean Street Wellbeing Programme.

"56 Dean Street became a centre of expertise and Leigh had always wanted to share this expertise via some kind of educational programme," says David Stuart, the Wellbeing Programme's curator. "Leigh truly believed that sexual health care requires a fresh approach; and that 56 Dean Street can provide better care if

we better understand our local communities and populations', their needs, desires and issues."

In this vein, the Dean Street Wellbeing Programme holds monthly presentations at the 20th Century Fox cinema on Soho Square, where experts and community representatives discuss subjects ranging from hepatitis to pornography, from the 'rosy glow' after sex to the need for same-sex SRE education in our schools. It incorporates community

forums like A Change of Scene and – here I have to declare my first vested interest – Let's Talk About Gay Sex & Drugs.

space to just be"

When setting up the event, designed to provide a safe space where anybody can talk honestly about these subjects, I approached David Stuart as the clinic's Substance Use Lead. 56 Dean Street not only support the event but David helps me co-organise and has contributed to its success. In November we will hold our



Attitude Award Winner LEGEND AWARD

Alexander McQueen

A man that revolutionised avant-garde fashion, McQueen is one of the most innovative fashion designers the world has ever seen. Despite his untimely death, he continues to influence the industry.

WORDS JOSEPH KOCHARIAN

here is no disputing that Alexander McQueen is a bona fide legend and icon of fashion. There are not enough superlatives to describe the late designer. His influence on fashion transcends the industry he dominated, seeping into the realms of art, celebrity, provocation and creating a wealth of urban myths that still swirl around him. In short he created magic. Born Lee Alexander McQueen to Ronald and Joyce in East London, on 17th March 1969, he always maintained that the fashion world seemed 'other' to him. The youngest of six children, and incredibly close to his mother until her death, he often said that he wasn't born into fashion,

which created an internal disjoint with his relationship with it. Yet his talent was so explosive that he cultivated his idiosyncratic place in the history of fashion greats.

Lee left school at the age of 16, did an apprenticeship at Savile Row, moved on to Gieves and Hawkes before moving on to theatre-based Angels The Costumiers. Meticulous detail and theatrical drama would become a signature of McQueen. His MA show at Central Saint Martins was bought in its entirety by Isabella Blow, who would become an incredibly close friend. It was Blow that encouraged him to ditch his given name of Lee and instead use his middle

name Alexander. McQueen went on become Creative Director of Givenchy whilst simultaneously cultivating his own eponymous label. He was named British Designer of the Year four times, along with many other accolades in the fashion world.

However conceptual and ostentatious McQueen's designs were (often taking reference from historical silhouettes and techniques), they also transferred well off the runway, creating a huge scope of influence from celebrity to commercial fashion. Lady Gaga wore the infamous Armadillo shoes that are unmistakable McQueen in her video for *Bad Romance*, while Britney Spears took a liking to his 'bumster'

Vincent Peters / Trunk Archive





style jeans which introduced the low slung jean that showed derrière cleavage to the public. His instantly recognisable skull prints are still a strong identifier of his brand, as well as influencing a slew of other brands mimicking the popular print on a mass scale.

The clothes he created extended past their exquisite technical construction. Silhouettes were conceptual and had a fully realised world crafted around them, which was nowhere more evident than in the spectacle of his fashion shows. It's hard to know where to start with the exhibitions that augmented his clothes. Often visceral, provocative and robust, they have provided not only some of the most iconic moments of McQueen's career, but of fashion history. A hologram of Kate Moss appearing ghost-like surrounded by billowing fabric; a model in a dress attacked by spray painting robots; and a human chessboard of models are just a few examples of the spectacles that he put on.

He was also ahead of the curve in terms of not conforming to the body stereotypes of the industry. He caused controversy by using double amputee model Aimee Mullins with prosthetic legs carved out of wood for a catwalk show. For his show 'Voss' in 2001, he forced the audience to stare at their reflection in a mirrored cube for an uncomfortably long time (due to a purposefully delayed show), before eventually revealing Erin O'Connor, Kate Moss and other models trapped in an asylum setting,





















Savage Beauty Exhibition

Credit: Farrell Agency/ REX Shutterstock Maslem Mehra/ REX Shutterstock Main: Sipa Press/ REX Shutterstock

before the smaller cube inside came crashing down to reveal former *Attitude* Features Editor Michelle Olley, naked, on a chaise wearing a gas mask surrounded by moths. It made for one of his more visceral shows, and it was this kind of provocation that earned him the tile as the 'l'enfant terrible' of fashion.

McQueen gave the fashion world plenty to think about aside from his clothing. As the self-proclaimed spin doctor of the industry, you could always rely on him to incept controversy into fashion to keep the voltage high at all times. He once allegedly sewed 'I am a cunt' into the lining of a handmade suit for Prince Charles.

Always outspoken, McQueen did not shy away from his sexuality. He said he knew he was gay at the age of six. He came out to his family at the age of 18, and then publically in an interview with i-D magazine shortly afterwards. He married his partner George Forsyth in an extravagant ceremony, way before same-sex marriage became legal. He was bold and articulate about his sexuality from the outset of his profile rising, rather than hiding it.

He focussed not on the press, but rather on the people who inspired him. His muses including artists and creators like Sam Taylor-Johnson and Björk. Many of them, including Kate Moss, Daphne Guinness and Naomi

Campbell attended his funeral after he committed suicide, nine days after the passing of his beloved mother Joyce.

The fashion world is fiercely protective of his legacy. A retrospective of his work, 'Savage Beauty', was originally housed in New York which prompted outrage and demand from both friends of McQueen and the public alike that it instead should first go to London - the city where he was was born. The exhibition eventually made its way to the Victoria and Albert Museum, and was extended way past its run to accommodate popular demand.

Lee McQueen was essentially a raw nerve of pulsing talent. In his short life he achieved over a decade of provocative art through the medium of fashion. A truly tortured genius, his tragic death on 11th February 2010 robbed the world of one of its most exciting and provocative visual artists who seemed to be still on an upward trajectory. The world is unlikely to see his like again.





Attitude Award Winner
EDITOR'S SPECIAL AWARD

Keegan Hirst

Keegan Hirst became the first British Rugby League player to come out as gay. In a sporting world still not fully comfortable with gay people he's a deserving recipient of our Editor's Special Award...

WORDS CLIFF JOANNOU STYLING JOSEPH KOCHARIAN PHOTOGRAPHY LEIGH KEILY

SUPPORTED BY



it's been a bit manic, yeah, but it's all been good," Keegan Hirst attests, reflecting on the monumental changes he's been through this year.

We're on location for his Editor's Special Attitude Award photoshoot and chit-chatting (as he says often in his thick Northern accent) about his rollercoaster year. He's a huge wall of rugged blokey-ness to look at, but his manner is amiable and calm. Exactly how tall are you, I ask? "Six foot six inches," he says. "Seven foot in heels." He delivers the line with a wry smile. There's a relaxed confidence about him that

surprises me given the massive upheaval that his life has seen, transforming himself from the 27-year-old captain of West Yorkshire's Batley Bulldogs rugby side to the world's newest sporting hero.

The past ten months have seen him, at last, come to terms with his sexuality, sadly end his eight year relationship with his wife Sara, come out as gay in a national newspaper and become friends with Ian McKellen and Elton John.

Despite the headline grabbing fact of being the first openly gay British Rugby League player, the biggest challenge he faced has been coming to terms with the fact that he was going to hurt a woman he loved.

"The day I married her I thought I was going to be with her for the rest of my life," he says of his wife Sara.

They met when he was 19 but the relationship broke down and the couple separated after the birth of his daughter. At that time Keegan had several gay experiences, but because they never felt comfortable, he didn't believe that he was actually gay. "As soon as it was done, I was out of there quick-sticks. I felt ashamed, really. I thought I don't want to feel like

this forever, so it was back into denial."

"I thought it can't be right because of how bad I felt about it. If I was gay I should be enjoying it. Because those experiences felt like a negative or dirty thing, I genuinely thought I can't be gay."

Sara and Keegan decided to give their relationship another go. Three years ago Sara gave birth to their second child, a boy. Keegan loves his wife and children, but while those gay feelings were pushed aside, they couldn't be ignored. On nights out Keegan and his mates would end up in mixed bars like





Fibre in Leeds where he'd check out guys while playing straight. "It started out as a gay bar years ago, but lads started going there because they knew girls would go there to hang out with their gay mates. It started as 80% gay and 20% straight, but now it's the other way around. I could go there and nobody would think anything of it."

His first gay experience was kissing a boy at school aged 15, but at the time he put it down to being a teenager and just mucking around. He looked at men like a straight guy might appreciate when another guy looked good. "But as I got older I suppose it started blurring more into attraction from appreciation."

As the years ticked by, Keegan's attraction to men lingered, and the doubts about his sexuality continued growing to the point where he couldn't avoid them any longer. At his lowest point he considered suicide to end his torment, feeling he'd rather be dead than for it all to come out. He recognises now how extreme those thoughts were, but in those darkest moments, when he felt most trapped, it seemed like a genuine option. But as a father and husband, he knew suicide was a desperate action, but ultimately a selfish option. Who would find him? How would it affect his family? What questions and pain would

"Looking back now, I was in deep denial"

that cause them? He never reached that point of trying to kill himself, but those dark thoughts helped him reach the realisation that he needed to be honest with himself and face the truth. Keegan's story of denial is one we commonly hear at Attitude and whilst it may be hard for some readers to comprehend that a gay man could marry a woman hoping he would be straight, it should make us ask questions: what in society makes some people find it so hard to come to terms with their sexuality?

"Looking back now, I was in deep denial," he reasons. "In my head it was always, 'there's just no way I'm gay, it must be a phase'. But I only really came to terms with it and knew what was going on earlier this year. It was a gradual acceptance."

His relationship with Sara began deteriorating and romantically the relationship 'petered out'. Rather than let her continue believing the breakdown was her fault, he decided it was time to tell her the truth. "I couldn't get the words out. I felt sick." Understandably, she was devastated. Arguments ensued. But he knows that he had no other option.

To his credit he is fully understanding of the fact that while his journey to accepting himself is underway, for Sara and his family it's only just begun. "You get it right in your head and it takes you however long, and then you kind of dump it on their feet, and they haven't had all that time. I told her just before we split up in June. Obviously, it's been hard for her but she's getting there. We're speaking. It's important for the kids." Of the Attitude Award and photo shoot, he says Sara said good luck and told him to enjoy it.

Although he expected the worst, the reaction from his friends and team has been overwhelmingly positive. "We've always supported each other. No matter what, we'd always stick together. I suppose I thought this would be different, but it wasn't." As with most things around a group of lads, there's the inevitable piss-taking that happens with any situation. "Obviously, there's a bit of banter in training but it's all good. You'd get the same if you got a bad haircut or anything like that. It's not malicious. If you can't laugh at yourself who can you laugh at? It's just something to have a bit of craic about."

Inevitably, as in most small towns gossip gets around fast. When a Rugby League journalist from *The Mirror* called his coach for comment about Keegan's sexuality, he decided to take control of it.



"You build it up in your head that everything's going to come crashing down, but it's not the case"

her. A lot of friends told her what she wanted to hear that I'm a bad bastard and that sort of thing, but she's not daft. After initially thinking they're right, she knows I'm not."

His message to other sports people is that coming out is not as bad as what you think it's going to be. "You build it up in your head that everything's going to come crashing down, but it's not the case. It doesn't change who you are or take away from what you are as a sportsman. It don't really matter to anybody else, you just think it matters to other people."

Despite the positive reaction to his coming out, he does acknowledge that in some sports it's certainly easier to be openly gay then others. "A lot of people are out in solo sports, like Tom Daley, where there isn't that team peer pressure and environment to keep up an image with the lads."

With Rugby Union's Sam Stanley recently coming out shortly after Keegan, and prior to him Gareth Thomas in December 2009, even they weren't the original rugby gay trailblazers. That honour goes to Australian Ian Roberts who did so in 1995. But why does a big, butch sport like rugby count four out gay men compared to so few in other team sports like football? Keegan sadly thinks when it comes to the 'beautiful game' it's the fans that are largely to blame for keeping stars closeted. "In Rugby League and Union, there's never much bother; it's a family sport, but because football is so well followed you get that mob mentality."

Still, despite the positive examples of the likes of Gareth Thomas, Keegan still felt the world would end if he was open about his sexuality. "When Gareth Thomas came out I didn't see myself as gay so it didn't actually make me think about my situation like his." It's a testament to how powerful denial can be.

He says that while the intense media focus on his new gay life is a little scary, it's equally exciting. Life has pretty much continued as normal for Keegan, with his usual set of friends. Except for two new ones, that is. At Manchester Pride he found himself in the company of Ian McKellen and fellow Attitude Award winner Corrie's Antony Cotton.

In coming out as the sporting world's new dream boy, he's skipped the transition of everyday gay life to join queer celebrity high society. "It was really surreal. On the Friday night at Manchester Pride I went for dinner with them and I was driving so I gave them a lift back to Antony's. Ian McKellen was sat in the passenger seat with Antony Cotton in the back, and we were just chit-chatting. Then, suddenly you realise this is weird! Because of who they are you think they'll be different, but it's just their job. They're still just a normal person."

So, how was Serena
McKellen? "He's proper
thespiany," Keegan says,
grinning. McKellen's advice
to the newly out rugby player?
"He said I should get into
showbiz," he laughs.

His new celebrity pals haven't stopped there. Emma Watson direct messaged him on Twitter and he got a call from HRH Elton John. "His PA rang for my number and I thought it was the lads taking the piss." Elton praised Keegan's bravery, saying how the world is changing and people like him are helping change it. They swapped emails and have been exchanging messages since.

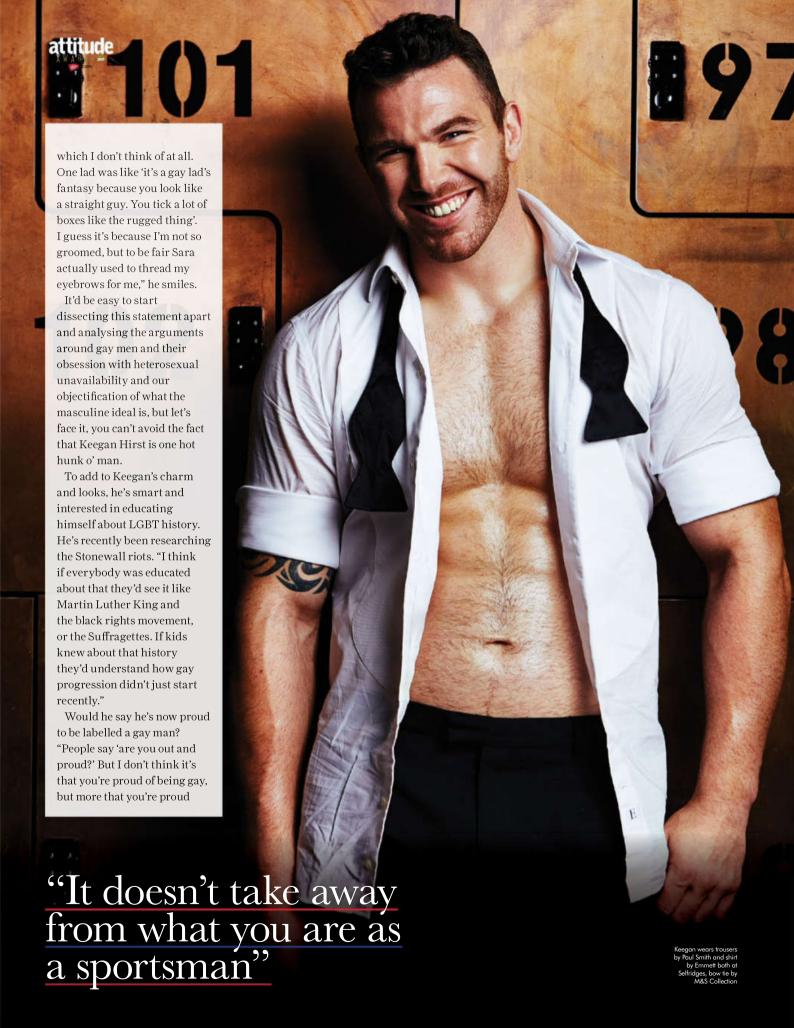
As a relative newcomer to the gay world Keegan's yet to dip his toe into full on gay abandon. "I haven't really experimented. It's not like I started going around the gay scene or anything. I still go out where I'd normally go. I have a couple mates that I got to know quite recently. But before I didn't know anybody who was gay. It was like going from one extreme to another, from zero to one hundred."

At Manchester Pride he got on stage to huge applause to speak about the strength in coming out, and even wore a Stonewall 'It Gets Better' t-shirt. As coming out experiences go, he's not holding back. And no, in case you're wondering, he hasn't downloaded Grindr. "I know about it but I haven't downloaded it. I don't think there'll be a lot to pick from in Batley."

So, how does he feel about his new sex symbol status? "Am I?" he questions. Maybe a little I reply, but I think he's being modest. Certainly in front of the camera he's very comfortable during our shoot. I remind him that he's a big, butch rugby player that's just come out. He's the stuff of many gay men's dreams. He gets my point and knows where I'm going with this.

"Well, people are sending tweets saying how 'you're good looking' and stuff like that,

















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"This is a new chapter, with new horizons and new opportunities"

you're finally being able to admit it to yourself and other people. It's like saying you're proud of having brown hair, but you don't get to pick that, do you? But you do get to make the choice to accept it yourself, and to tell other people about it and let other people in."

Keegan is a much happier man now that he's being honest with himself, but is clear to point out that it doesn't mean to say he wasn't happy before with his wife. "We had a good relationship, and the kids, and I don't regret that at all. But now things have changed, this is a new chapter, with new horizons and new opportunities."

As with anybody that finds themselves exploring their sexuality, he says his early experiences with men were uncomfortable. "I felt ashamed. It just wasn't a nice place to be. Even just kissing." And how does he feel now? "I'm fine with it now, but it goes to show how much it matters where you are and how comfortable you are with yourself and where your head is at."

As a gay man from a small town, who had few relatable gay role models at home, school or in the media he puts his own struggle to finding acceptance into the wider context of the fact that his height and appearance meant he didn't have to face the homophobia others have to contend with in society. "People say about me being brave for coming out, but to look at me

it's not massively obvious I'm gav. For some guvs walking down the street and looking more flambovant though, it's harder. But that's just part of who you are; it's more difficult in society for them just for being true to themselves. These guvs are braver than me because they're putting themselves out there, being themselves and not conforming to

what's expected."

I mention that even once we accept our sexuality, the experience of growing up gay in a straight world can affect us even after we come out. "I think that's because even though things have moved on, it's still not completely normal to be gay in society. Because we grew up without those role models we carry that with us. Hopefully, kids growing up now won't feel the same in future."

In Keegan's own way, by coming out so publically and doing the work he's doing now to raise awareness of gay men in sport, he's already doing his bit to help achieve a more accepting future society.



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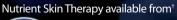
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with Dr Christian



Our health expert Dr Christian Jessen answers your medical queries



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Sometimes I find it really difficult to get myself out of bed in the morning. No matter bow long I sleep, I still feel really tired when I wake up. What's wrong with me? Jonathan, Bristol

There could be many different causes for this, including mood disorders like depression, or even problems with your hormones like thyroid disorders, or with your blood like anaemia. Even simple things like disturbance of your sleep because the room is too hot or your bed is too uncomfortable could all be playing a part. I think the first step is to have a quick general check up with your GP to check there aren't any underlying medical disorders and then have a quick look at your bedroom arrangements. The idea that we all need eight hours sleep is a myth; every one of us is different and we tend to sleep the amount that is right for us, but if you're sleeping a lot and still feeling tired, then I think this is worth investigating.

My foreskin has started to feel much tighter recently. I've never had this problem before. Will it just go away or should I do something about it?

Rich, Aberdeen

If this is something that is new to you (i.e. you've never had this problem before), then it should definitely be investigated by a doctor. Some chronic skin conditions or infections can cause scarring and changes to your foreskin, which may result in it becoming tighter. Any underlying skin disorders that cause such chronic inflammation to the skin can be treated with a steroid

Didn't know?

Anaemia

ANAEMIA IS AN IRON DEFICIENCY WHERE A LACK OF IRON IN THE BODY LEADS TO A REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF RED BLOOD CELLS, AND CAN LEAVE YOU TIRED AND PALE. IT CAN BE DIAGNOSED WITH A SIMPLE BLOOD TEST AND TREATED WITH A GREATER IRON INTAKE.

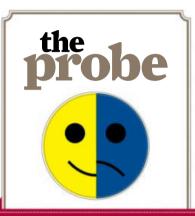
cream which reduces that inflammation and the amount of damage the inflammation does to your skin. But don't buy a steroid cream without consulting a doctor first. Sometimes scarring or changes to the foreskin are not reversible and you may need a partial circumcision to loosen out the foreskin. Your GP can refer you to an urologist for an opinion on this. Without further information I couldn't give a diagnosis, other than to say any changes to your body that weren't there months ago ought to be looked at by your GP.

I shaved my crotch area and now have itchy red spots appearing down there. What's wrong? Can I do anything about it?

Aleksi, London

You probably have one of two things: ingrown hairs or folliculitis, both of which are very common after shaving, especially if you're not used to shaving in that particular area. Folliculitis will appear as raised red spots, possibly with white, pus-filled heads. A bit of antibiotic cream from your pharmacy should sort them out. Ingrown hairs simply mean that a growing hair follicle is trapped underneath your skin and irritating it around that area. Scrubbing gently when you're in the shower can help release the hair follicle from under the skin. To avoid this in the future, always use a clean razor and try to use a razor with just one or two blades instead of four or five because the latter shave much closer to the skin.

Dr Christian is on Twitter: @doctorchristian



Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER, OR SAD, IS A TYPE OF DEPRESSION THAT IS LINKED TO THE CHANGE IN SEASON AND THE LENGTH OF DAYTIME. THE EPISODES OF DEPRESSION TEND TO OCCUR DURING THE AUTUMN AND WINTER MONTHS WHEN DAYLIGHT PERIODS ARE SHORT AND NIGHT CAN BE LONG. THE EXACT CAUSE ISN'T REALLY KNOWN BUT IT'S CERTAINLY UNDERSTOOD THAT CHANGES IN THE AMOUNT OF LIGHT AFFECTS THE BRAIN'S CHEMISTRY AND HORMONE LEVELS AND THAT THIS MAY CONTRIBUTE TO BRINGING ON DEPRESSIVE EPISODES. IT'S USUALLY SIMPLE TO DIAGNOSE BECAUSE OF THE IMPACT ON YOUR FEELINGS AND YOUR MOODS, GENERALLY PEOPLE TEND TO FEEL LESS CHEERFUL IN WINTER. HOWEVER, I WOULD ADVISE THAT YOU GET A DIAGNOSIS AND LOOK AT TREATMENTS AVAILABLE, INCLUDING LIGHT THERAPY, WHICH INVOLVES SITTING WITH AN ELECTRONIC BOX THAT PRODUCES A VERY BRIGHT LIGHT TO STIMULATE YOUR HYPOTHALAMUS GLAND TO PRODUCE THE RIGHT HORMONES AND ADJUST YOUR BRAIN CHEMISTRY SO THAT DEPRESSIVE EPISODES BECOME MUCH LESS LIKELY.

DEREK THELER, THE 6'5 STAR OF E4'S SITCOM BABY DADDY TALKS DIET, FITNESS AND LANDING THAT DREAM SUPERHERO ROLE.

YOU HAVE BECOME SUCH A POPULAR GUY, MAINLY BECAUSE YOU WHIP YOUR TOP OFF SO MUCH. IS THAT A REQUIREMENT FOR PLAYING DANNY?

IT MUST LOOK LIKE I HAVE IT WRITTEN INTO MY CONTRACT THAT I HAVE TO TAKE MY SHIRT OFF EVERY TWO EPISODES, BUT IT'S NOT TRUE. WHEN I SEE IT COME UP IN THE SCRIPT -OH, DANNY TAKES OFF HIS SHIRT - I'M NOT SHOCKED BUT IT MEANS I HAVE TO MAKE SURE I GO TO THE GYM A COUPLE OF MORE TIMES THAT WEEK. HAVING MY SHIRT OFF SO REGULARLY MEANS I MAKE SURE THAT I STAY IN MY BEST SHAPE. I AM ALWAYS READY FOR IT.

YOU'RE A WHOPPING 6'5 AND INCREDIBLY SEXY - DO YOU THINK THAT HELPED YOU LAND WORK?

I DEFINITELY THINK MY LOOKS HAVE HELPED. I ALWAYS HAVE TO TRY TO LOOK MY BEST AND MY SIZE DOES MAKE ME STAND OUT A LITTLE BIT. I THINK IT HAS HELPED GET SOME OPPORTUNITIES BUT IT DOES TAKE A HELL OF A LOT OF WORK TO DO THIS JOB, WHEN I FIRST ARRIVED IN L.A. I PUT A LOT OF MONEY AND TIME IN TO ACTING CLASSES; IT'S A GIVE AND TAKE WITH MY SIZE. IT'S HARD TO GET IN THE DOOR AND HAVE A CONVERSATION WHEN YOU ARE THE SIZE OF THE DOOR. BUT I AM THANKFUL I'M IN THE POSITION THAT I AM IN. AND I USE IT TO MY ADVANTAGE.

DID YOU EVER TRY MODELLING?

I DID TO MAKE SOME MONEY. I WAS BROKE. BUT I'M TOO BIG FOR SAMPLE SIZES AND I'M A FOOT TALLER THAN MOST MALE MODELS ON THE CATWALK. MY BIG BREAK WAS WHEN I WAS BOOKING TV COMMERCIALS AND I WAS VERY FORTUNATE. LUCK HAS ALWAYS BEEN ON MY SIDE AND I DON'T WANT IT RUN OUT ANYTIME SOON. BOOKING COMMERCIALS MEANT I DIDN'T HAVE TO DO WAITING JOBS.

DO YOU GET PEOPLE TRYING TO WHIP OFF YOUR SHIRT IN PUBLIC?

My TV mom Melissa Peterman is terrible. WHENEVER WE ARE DOING INTERVIEWS OR AFTER WE'VE FINISHED TAPING THE SHOW SHE IS ALWAYS TRYING TO GET ME TO TAKE MY CLOTHES OFF IN FRONT OF PEOPLE. PEOPLE DO ASK, BUT IF I'M AT A BAR OR AT THE MARKET THEN THE ANSWER IS USUALLY NO.

ARE YOU ON A STRICT DIET?

No, not really. I just watch what I eat AND I MAKE SURE I WORK OUT DAILY. IT'S IMPORTANT TO LOOK GOOD FOR MY CAREER. AND IT'S HEALTHY TOO. I HAVE TYPE ONE DIABETES SO I HAVE TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT WHAT I EAT AND I HAVE TO STAY HEALTHY.

HOW DID THAT DIAGNOSIS AFFECT YOU?

I FOUND OUT WHEN I WAS THREE. IT'S AN EXTRA RESPONSIBILITY. IT WAS HARD GROWING UP WITHOUT BEING IRRESPONSIBLE WITH MYSELF AND MY HEALTH, BUT IT TAUGHT ME A VALUABLE LESSON ABOUT STAYING HEALTHY.

IF PEOPLE WANTED TO LOOK LIKE YOU, WHAT SHOULD THEY EAT?

I DON'T EAT A LOT OF CARBS LIKE BREAD. I EAT A LOT OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES AND MEATS AND RICE. BOTTOM LINE, MY DIET IS MAINLY MEAT AND VEGETABLES.





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AND WHAT KIND OF
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DO YOU GET UP
TO?

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AN OUTDOORSY
GUY. I LIKE
HIKING AND
OUTDOOR
WORKOUTS
WITH BODY
WEIGHT. BUT
WHEN IT COMES
TO GETTING IT
DONE, I JUST
GET IN THE GYM
AND POUND IT OUT.

WHAT ROUTINES DO YOU
DO AT THE GYM?

I HAVE SEVERAL ROUTINES
INCLUDING A CHEST, BACK AND CORE

DAY, A LEG DAY, AND A SHOULDERS AND ARMS DAY.

WHICH PARTS OF YOUR BODY DO YOU WORK OUT THE MOST?

My core! I always do abs to finish every workout.

WHICH BODY PART ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

THAT'S A HARD ONE BECAUSE I'M CONSTANTLY TRYING TO IMPROVE. MAYBE MY CHEST BECAUSE I HAVE HAD TO WORK IT OUT THE HARDEST TO SEE GAINS IN STRENGTH AND SIZE.

WHAT KIND OF HOME EXERCISES DO YOU DO?

I like to switch between regular free weight training and high intensity circuit training that hits multiple muscle groups without a Break. So I can really get a sweat on.

WHAT WOULD YOU NORMALLY HAVE FOR BREAKFAST LUNCH AND DINNER?

I'M A BIG EATER! I ALWAYS MAKE SURE TO EAT THREE BALANCED MEALS EVERY DAY. I'M NOT HUGE ON BREAD AND PASTA, SO I STICK TO MEAT AND VEGETABLES. I LOVE A GOOD BREAKFAST BURRITO. CAN YOU DRINK ALCOHOL ON YOUR DIET?

 $I^\prime \text{M}$ not a big drinker. And my diabetes has also played a part in that. I take my health so seriously. Drinking can be dangerous for people with my condition, so I drink in moderation. On occasions I'll have a couple of beers, but I like to think I'm pretty responsible overall.

DO YOU HAVE A PLAYLIST YOU LISTEN TO WHEN YOU'RE WORKING OUT?

I was raised with classic rock. My Dad was always at the gym when I was young and we became workout buddles fast. You could always hear bands like the Doors, Ozzy, and of course AC/DC pumping at our gym.

WHAT'S THE DREAM ROLE?

I want to play a superhero. That was why I came to Hollywood. When Marvel started making movies I wanted to be part of that. I'm really excited about the next move and I hope I get the opportunity to wear a cape! It's every boy's dream. And I can't wait to do it.

WELL, YOU LOOK LIKE A SUPERHERO SO IT WOULD BE MADNESS FOR YOU NOT TO BE.

WELL, STAY TUNED AND LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS!

• BABY DADDY AIRS ON E4

To read more of this interview, including exclusive pictures, check out the digital edition of Attitude

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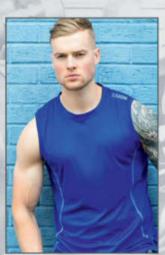






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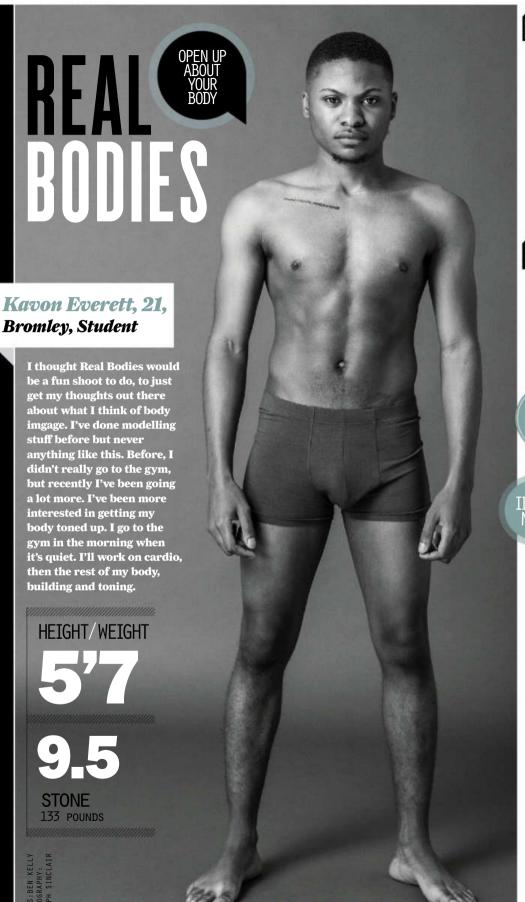




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DIET

I EAT WHAT I WANT. I KNOW IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE 80% WHAT YOU EAT AND 20% GYM WORK, BUT I JUST EAT WHAT I LIKE. THERE ARE TIMES WHEN I DO DETOXES AND I EAT HEALTHILY, BUT THEN I END UP GOING BACK TO JUST EATING WHAT I WANT TO EAT. I DON'T USUALLY FEEL MUCH BETTER FOR EATING WELL. IF I DID, I WOULD KEEP DOING IT.

GUILTY PLEASURES

I BINGE ON CHOCOLATE AND SWEETS. MY FAVOURITE IS CADBURY'S MARVELLOUS CREATIONS WITH HONEYCOMB OR A DAIM BAR



DAIM BAR



IDFAL MAN SINCLAIR

A lot of the guys I like are really toned up and muscly, but I don't want to be like that, I just want to be a bit defined. I would sav James Hill

who was on Celebrity Big Brother.

Manscaping

I just do some body shaving. I keep the hair on my head and on my legs, but the middle bits I shave. I guess I do that every couple of weeks or so.



Top Body Product

Coconut oil. You can use it for everything. It comes in a tub, and it's all natural, so you can use it on your hair or even to brush your teeth because it whitens them. It's a really handy thing to have.



Clothes

I just wear stuff that fit me. I like fitted jeans and fitted trousers, and shirts that show off your physique. Mostly I just wear normal high street stuff like H&M and Topman.





Quick Questions

Do you think there's a lot of pressure in the gay community to have a good body?

I would say so, yeah. It depends on the people. For the majority, it's the first thing they're interested in and look for. But there's also people who don't really care about that sort of thing. That's not why I work out though. I feel like I look good for myself. I didn't always go to the gym and I was fine before that.

Do you find people are only interested in bodies when you're on apps like Grindr?

Well, no one really sees my body until they need to. If I go on a date with someone and it goes well and we do something, that's the only time anyone sees me. I don't send nudes or pictures or anything like that. Only on my Facebook do I have one picture that goes down to my chest, but that's it!

And is that picture more

popular than others? Yeah, it got quite a lot of likes very quickly, compared to other uploads.

How comfortable do you feel being naked?

I'm never really naked much, only when I have to be naked. I would never really just walk around topless or stuff. I found today fine though. When you're with another guy, how important is it that they look good as well?

For me, I guess I can be quite shallow. You don't have to be toned or anything, but I just don't like larger guys. I don't really care if you don't have muscles, but I'm not into bigger men.

What if the guy had a better body than you, would that intimidate you?

No, that's a good thing. That's motivation to go to the gym even more.

If you could change one thing about your body, what would it be?
I would be a bit taller.



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- 30g Marshmallow Fluff

Method:

- **1.** Weigh out VitaFibre and microwave for 30-45 seconds. Pour into mixing bowl.
- **2.** Weigh out out USN Whey Oats (Marshmallow Cookie) and to mixing bowl.
- 3. Add malt extract and raisins.
- **4.** Mix with a fork until it clumps together and forms a sticky dough ball.
- **5.** Kneed the dough ball until bound and slightly sticky.
- **6.** Divide into 6 even balls and placed on a non stick baking tray. Lightly oil the tray.
- **7.** Press balls with fork or palm of your hand to form flat cookie like disks.
- **8.** Place in a preheated oven and bake for 10 mins on 180 degree Celsius.
- **9.** Take from oven and place on a cooling rack for 5 mins.
- **10.** Add 5g of Marshmallow Fluff to the top of each cookie.
- **11.** Double them up if you dare! (Place one one top of the other and make a cookie sandwich)



Macros:

Carbs 202g Protein 68g Fat 18g

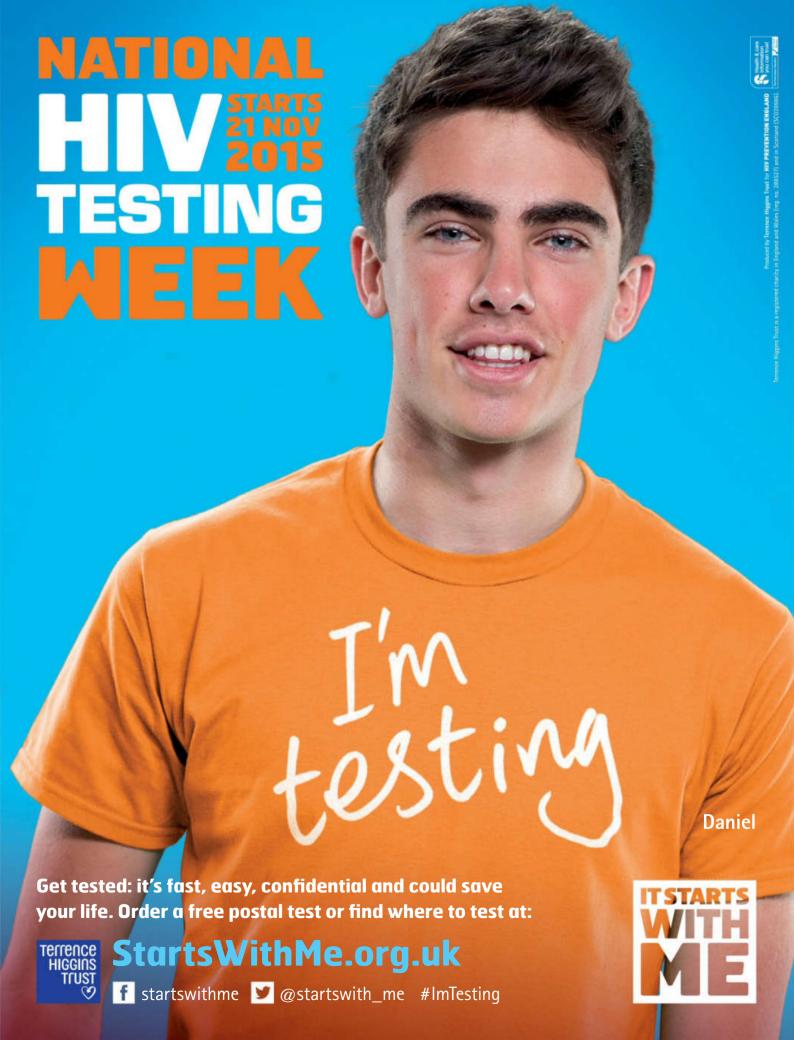
Approximate Macros
Per Portion (Makes 6);
(One single Cookie with
Marshmallow Fluff)
Carbs 33g
Protein 12g
Fat 3g



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DISCOVER THE NEW GLOBAL USN RANGE





Ru Coming Out?

WE LOOK AT HOW YOU TACKLED THE WHOLE COMING OUT THING

TYLER BROSTROM, 18, IDAHO USA

For most people in the LGBTQIA community, the difficult part of coming out is telling your parents. It's typically a whole lot of nervous fumbling, clammy hands, tears and hoping against hope that you won't be rejected or kicked out or beaten or killed or shot into space in a small capsule adorned with a rainbow flag. Sometimes, horrible things do happen. But more probably, they'll 'love us all the same', even if they don't quite understand, and then go back to watching television, albeit with a lot of silent questions.

Regardless of how they take the news, it's not like you'll have to come out to them twice. Or three times. And then continuously have to remind them that you won't be interested in or married to a woman. Like, ever.

I should add that my parents aren't amnesiacs, dementia patients, or even particularly forgetful; they just didn't believe me the first two times.

Fitting in with my classmates was never a concern of mine growing up. I was never unpopular, and I didn't care about how people saw me. I was more than willing to make a fool of myself. I definitely lost that part of myself growing up. Being weird and effeminate was fun then, because people would notice me. Of course, it took a bit of a darker turn once I hit junior high. It's pretty well established that kids aren't exactly kind to each other, and being strange and not traditionally masculine in a town best known for its past Ku Klux Klan involvement became dangerous quickly; I didn't have a choice but to (subconsciously) repress myself.

I must have done well, considering I didn't know I was gay until I was late into my first relationship with a girl at age fourteen. Frankly, I should have seen the signs. We dated for eight months and I never kissed her. She was very pretty, but I couldn't think of





THE PHRASE 'ARE YOU SURE?' HAS A TIME AND A PLACE. THE THIRD TIME YOUR SON HAS TOLD YOU HE'S GAY IS NOT ONE OF THEM her as more than a friend. I eventually ended it out of exhaustion, confusion, and fear. 'Our song' had been a cover of Kermit the Frog's The Rainbow Connection; I didn't notice the irony at the time.

My coming out process started with one of my best friends, who is biromantic. She and I constituted the entire queer community in my high school. From there began the process of telling my close friends, which mostly meant being met with a lot of variations on the slightly irritating 'oh, we already knew'. The intention was always supportive, but it usually felt like they were taking my confidence in them for granted.

Coming out to my very conservative, very Catholic parents was an unnecessarily lengthy and painful process that lasted about six months. None of the three times was I

prepared, and by round three I was kind of over it.

Like most things in life, the phrase, 'are you sure?' has a time and a place. The third time your son has told you he's gay is not one of them.

It's not as if I hadn't asked myself the same question day after day for eight months. In that regard, coming out has been one of the most formative experiences of my life. Lacking any sort of queer guidance, I was able to essentially rethink my entire identity instead of sinking comfortably into one 'acceptable' role or another. The rigid structure of privilege I was raised on was dealt a formidable blow (though certainly not destroyed), and my world crumbled around it. I didn't have an excuse not to consider crazy new ideas on religion, politics, or sex; I was gay, and people would reject me, whether I pandered to them or not. In other words, yes, I was sure. Considering my parents' own ideologies, I have been fortunate enough to be met with ambivalence about my sexuality, even if the rest of the town didn't agree.

My final years of high school were strange and lonely as high school tends to be. Despite the odds, I fought through and won. I had a tough time coming out, but the process turned me into the sort of individual I always admired as a little kid.

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CONFESSIONS OF A COMPULSIVE OVEREATER JE SUIS FATTY GAY



FATTY GAY TAKES TO THE STAGE AND LAPS UP THE ATTENTION OF BEING A CHORUS GIRL AND A DYING MOTHER.

'I REVELLED IN MY LARGER

THAN LIFE PERSONA, USING

SELF-DEPRECATING HUMOUR

AS MY ARMOUR'

t secondary school, not only did I receive the accolade of being the 'Fattest Kid in School', but I was also known as the loudest and one of the most badly behaved too. To protect the shy, sensitive and wounded child within me, I transformed into the exact opposite; a seemingly arrogant, attention seeking, loud mouth comedian, quick to rebuff jibes by taking the piss out of others and myself. Of course, I was hiding behind my fat, all sixteen stone of it.

Like Dawn French, Heather off *EastEnders* and other famous fatties, I revelled in my larger than life persona, using self-deprecating humour as my armour. With the help of my new alter-ego, I became the life and soul of the party. I did impressions; told jokes; sang songs and acted out scenes from films. I became addicted to attention. Yes, they continued to rip into me for having boy-tits and not being

able to climb out of the swimming pool. And once a year, I still had the whole school jeering at me as I finished last in crosscountry, but I laughed along with them. I was still called a 'fat queer',

but it was now on my terms.

The more I over indulged on attention and food, the more my schoolwork suffered. I was finding it increasingly difficult to concentrate in class as my brain fought to keep up with the erratic highs and lows of my mood. I was repeatedly moved away from other kids for

being distracting to them, and often found myself in detention.

I attended a fiercely competitive all-boys school, where you were either an academic or a sportsman or both. If, like me, you weren't either, you ended up in the drama department. Drama was the one place I felt I belonged. Taking to the stage in school plays meant I could bask in the spotlight, soaking up the applause of class mates, parents and teachers. I played a chorus girl in Cinderella and a dying mother in a Greek tragedy, but I knew I'd really arrived when I won an award at a prize giving for my role as Frau Gretel, the German inn-keeper's wife, in The Dracula Spectacular Show – a sort of junior version of Rocky Horror. When they called me on stage to collect my award, I was no longer in my dreary school hall; I was at the Oscars winning Best Actor in front of Hollywood A-Listers. I tried to make

> a speech to thank my nearest and dearest, but was shooed off by my English teacher.

Treading the boards, I came into contact with other gay boys. While none of us were actually out to each

other, we all shared a love for pop music, trashy films and musical theatre. Ironically, being gay was the only thing we didn't really talk about. Individually, we still got bullied, but together we were a force to be reckoned with, so by sixth form we were pretty much left alone. They were my first real friends,

and with them I learnt there was strength in numbers. Jack had his sights set on a glittering career in the West End as the new Michael Ball. Craig was going to be one of Kylie's backing dancers. Tommy was going to be a pop star, duetting with Madonna and Barbra Streisand. He had his first few albums already mapped out. As for me? I was going to be on TV, perhaps as *Blue Peter*'s first openly fat presenter.

Somehow I managed to scrape through my exams, and as we prepared to leave school, Jack got a place in drama school and Craig began auditioning for dance troupes. Not long after, we kind of drifted apart. Our paths would cross again, but for now we preferred to do our own thing.

Tommy and I had become close, most of our school presumed we were boyfriends, but we never actually were. When I finally came out at 16, I turned up to a local gay youth group and wasn't that surprised to find Tommy there. That cemented our friendship, and soon we saw ourselves as each other's Thelma and Louise. Now, officially out to each other and part of the youth group, we stood on the threshold of a new grown up world of gay bars and meeting gay men. This terrified me more than anything, so I continued to binge eat, eventually hitting eighteen stone. I'd worked so hard to find acceptance at school being Fatty Gay, but how would the gay scene and other gay

I was about to find out. jesuisfattygay@attitude.co.uk

men take to me?

MARK AMES PRESENTS





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TONY, MARNIE (3) AND FINN STUART, (1),

We've been together 25 years, and the journey of wanting kids started about 6 years ago, partly because we were looking after our niece quite a lot at the time. We first looked into adoption and got accepted for that, but we were told we wouldn't get a child under 5, and that we might get a lot of press as the first gay male couple in Essex to adopt, so in the end we decided to look at surrogacy instead.

It was a social worker of ours who put us in touch with a married woman who was interested in being a surrogate. She had a grown up kid of her own but loved being pregnant and wanted to get involved. It worked out well for both of us as we got on from the start. You can't pay for surrogacy in the UK, you can only pay for the woman's expenses. The biggest cost for us was the fertilisation treatment. We had that in London, Manchester, Poland and Turkey, at various private clinics. We don't discuss who contributed to the surrogacy, only because we believe that's our children's information, and so the first people we'll ever discuss that with will be them. The kids do have a relationship with the surrogate -

almost like a family friend – although they are legally ours and she has no active input in their upbringing.

We had originally only planned for one child, but when Marnie started sleeping through the night and it all settled down, we thought it might be nice to have two. It was a shock having a son as he's much harder work than our daughter ever was. By a certain age, our daughter was colouring and she'd sit and watch

Peppa Pig and you could read a book with her. He's interested in climbing, breaking our cupboards, emptying out drawers; he just goes from one thing to the next. He's adorable but a totally different character.

Beforehand we discussed the impact having gay parents would have on the kids, but we thought we could raise well-adjusted children who would be able to cope with that. Now our daughter goes to preschool a few times a week, and so far we've had no problems whatsoever. A couple of the mums have said to us that their children have asked them why Marnie has two



WF HAD ORIGINALLY ONLY PLANNED FOR ONE CHILD... BUT WE THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE NICE TO HAVE TWO dads and they've explained it and the kids just shrug it off. It's not an issue for them. I think we're lucky to be growing up in an age where it's really not a problem for most people. Our daughter's teacher found it funny that a few weeks ago, during music time, when all the children put forward a song for the rest to sing like Twinkle, Twinkle, our daughter asked for Rebel Heart by Madonna!

We wouldn't change our life for the world. Even though we're knackered most of the time and haven't been to the gym in two years, we really wouldn't change anything. The pleasure we get from our kids is in the little things, like our daughter winning a race at sports day and our son running in to our room at night and wanting a cuddle. Nothing in our lives previous to that has made us as happy as the children have. It's been an absolutely positive experience for us. We've got lots of gay friends and they openly admit that it wouldn't be for them and that's absolutely fine. But for us, it's been amazing.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO BE CONSIDERED FOR FAMILY GUYS EMAIL A PHOTO AND A FEW WORDS TO BEN.KELLY@ATTITUDE.CO.UK

problem shared...







GOT A PROBLEM? DR RANJ SINGH AND WAYNE DHESI ARE

Dear Attitude,

I have been in a relationship with my partner for five happy years. As with most relationships our sex life has slowed down a little bit, but as far as I thought that was fine. Recently my partner sat me down and asked me if I would be OK with opening up the relationship. At first he suggested we invite a third person for a threesome (which I thought he meant as a joke), but since then he has asked me if I would mind if he hooked up with other guys to spice things up.

I love my boyfriend and I don't want to lose him, but I am not sure I want to share him with anyone. I have told him that I don't need anyone else (hoping he'd say the same) but he keeps telling me that he would like to have sex with other guys. He assures me it's not cheating because no emotions are involved. What do I say? I'm not a big fan of the idea because I don't like the idea of him shagging around and me knowing about it, but I don't want to lose him either.

Richard, Elephant & Castle



It's time to be completely honest with yourself: would you really be comfortable with an open relationship? If the answer is no, then you need to make your feelings

Although sex can be an important part of a relationship, it has different significance to different people. Plus, it's perfectly normal for your sex life to change over time despite what the media may make us think. There are various things that people try to spice things up, but at the end of the day the only thing that definitely works is talking about it.

Open relationships are spoken about much more often among gay couples, and they do work for some. However, if the idea makes you uncomfortable then you need to voice that. While understanding and compromise are important in any relationship, it is vital that you are both on the same page and happy with the way things are going.

Likewise, whilst open relationships might provide a solution, they are not without their risks. What if you (or your boyfriend) develop feelings for the other person? Also, making sure you are sexually responsible is important anyway, but especially so if you are sleeping with other people.

At the end of the day, I know you love your boyfriend,

but you may have to accept that you want fundamentally different things, and that may not work out for you. No one should feel pressurised into doing anything. Remember. it's YOUR relationship, YOUR life and YOUR health. Don't feel bad about it either

'Couples counselling can provide a space for you to discuss the things you both want from the relationship'

- you deserve to be just as happy as your boyfriend! **Ranj**

• Dr Ranj Singh is a NHS and TV doctor and host of CBeehies Get Well Soon.



Dear Richard,

Firstly, if you have to try and convince yourself that opening up your relationship would be a good thing,

it suggests that it's probably not really something you're happy with. Of course relationships are all about compromise, but when it comes to something as personal and intimate as your sex life, any agreement has to be one that both people are completely happy with.

I think it's important to acknowledge that just because your boyfriend has started this conversation it doesn't mean that he doesn't love you anymore. If he simply wanted to sleep with other people then he could have just done it behind your back and you would have been none the wiser. Your boyfriend has definitely done the right thing by talking to you about this.

Open relationships can, and do, work for some couples, but only when both parties are on the same page. Rules have to be agreed from the start and the arrangement has to be something that both people really want to do. Saying this, just because open relationships exist, it doesn't mean that you should feel pressured into re-evaluating your principles of a relationship.

It's clear that you are very worried about your relationship and you've definitely done the right thing by taking a step back, rather than simply agreeing to something that doesn't sit right with you just to please your boyfriend.

Relationships are about mutual respect and that means that your boyfriend should listen to what you want as well as being confident enough to tell you what he wants. Your relationship has always been exclusive up until this point, so it's your boyfriend who now wants to change the goalposts, therefore he

should be sensitive to your concerns.

You say that you aren't happy with the idea of him being intimate with other people and you knowing about it. Does that mean that you are considering an alternative whereby he doesn't have to discuss his hook ups with you? How would you really feel about this situation? Would you realistically be able to deal with not knowing who he is being intimate with?

You need to be 100% honest with your boyfriend and let him know how you feel about his suggestion of opening up your relationship, including sharing your anxieties. Couples counselling can be really helpful and provide a neutral, safe space for you to discuss the things that you both want from your relationship. Organisations such as relate. org.uk offer specific services and counsellors for people in same-sex relationships and they have offices all over the country.

Finally, whatever decision you come to remember that it's important for anyone, whether they are single, in a long-term (exclusive or open) relationship to have regular sexual health check-ups. Trust is obviously really important in any relationship but we all have a responsibility to our own health and wellbeing to ensure we maintain our sexual health. *Wayne*

• Wayne Dhesi is the founder of Rucomingout.com and a Youth Programmes Manager at Stonewall UK.



SHOULD YOU HAVE AN OPEN RELATIONSHIP?

Opening up a relationship is not one to do in haste or without careful discussion with your partner. Here are five steps for you both to consider before deciding to go down that path...

Have you sat down and had a chat about what kind of relationship you would like? If you're thinking of having an 'open relationship', then you really need to find out if it's something you both would be comfortable with.

2 Is this something you would do long term or for a specific 'trial' period? Whatever you agree, you both need to be happy with it.

Would you be happy telling other people about your relationship? It's likely to come up if you are seeing other people, and it's probably better to be upfront.

Are you both practising safer sex? Are you getting regular sexual health checks? If not, having an open relationship poses big health risks to you and your partners.

Have you got a contingency plan? Are you comfortable with the risk that one of you may develop feelings for the 'other person'? Make sure you know what to do if that happens.

How to:

He's only been into Taylor Swift since 1989

His Instagram is more than 50% selfies

...and in every one he uses the hashtag #gay

He only reads books that have already been made into films

He uses the smiley and frowning emojis but has never once utilised 'dancing woman in red dress'

He says things like 'I tell it how it is', 'I am direct', 'Expect sarcasm' on profiles

His favourite Meryl Streep movie is Mamma Mia – "It's such a romp!"

He uses the word romp

His idea of eating out is a cheeky Nando's, every time

He uses the phrase cheeky Nando's...

Paul Flynn
IS OVER IT

WHERE ARE ALL MY SEXUALLY FLUID MEN AT?

You may have spotted some recent excitement around a YouGov poll revitalising the Kinsey scale of sexuality. Alfred Kinsey was a pioneering bisexual scholar and scientist who spent some of the last century investigating a sliding scale between heterosexuality and homosexuality (1=completely straight, 6=completely gay). In the 2015 render, almost 50% of 18-24 year olds identified somewhere in the middle of his scale. Yav!

At first glance, this appeared to be major news. It felt about right. The Guardian ran a sweetly rambling story identifying a nascent generation for whom sexuality is now fluid. The brilliant one man gay think-tank Mark Simpson went further still, announcing it the end of 'monosexuality'. Yet something about the survey was irking me, an itch I needed to scratch.

It may just be a gorgeous coincidence or, indeed actual proof of the survey's validity that two of the most conspicuous role models for young women between 18-24 are currently enjoying relationships with women. Cara Delevingne's dating the gifted Brooklyn musician, Annie 'St Vincent' Clark. At the less cerebral but no less scintillating end of the star-chamber, it's been hard not to intimate some of Miley Cyrus's attraction to her smoking hot girlfriend, Victoria's Secret model Stella Maxwell spelt out good and large in her psychedelic sex anthem, Bang My Box (I blushed).

Women at the top of their game like Rita Ora, Kristen Stewart, Jess Glynne and Rihanna have translucently intermediary Kinsey scores. These are great times to be a curious young female. If you're looking for a generational emblem to substantiate even a passing sexual interest in another woman, there is a full deck of

specify its findings by gender. That was my itch. It's still pretty much impossible to imagine Zavn Malik, Jack Wilshere, Jack O'Connell or Nick Jonas slipping into a casual same-sex relationship with the celebrated fluidity of their female peers. Equally, would we be as cool with one of the prevalent young British gay male men - Tom Daley, Sam Smith, Russell Tovey breaking stiff rank and dating women?

fantastic, bright, sexy, successful,

unapologetic totems at whom to gawp.

For men? Not so much. The poll didn't

There is no reason to suggest young men's sexuality is any less curiously Kinsey-ish than young women's. Yet still it feels it, publically. If you wanted to find a single example of a man once presumed 1 on the Kinsey scale who has had a relationship with another man in the UK media over the last 2 vears, you'd find lone star Paul Ross. Go back further and there's another, more positive example: Frank Ocean. Frank's affair formed the basis of one of the decade's great albums, channel ORANGE, yet it was couched in heartbreak and sadness, not euphoria and hotness like Miley's. Box-banging was mysteriously absent, in its place a movingly direct invocation to a god that may now hate him.

The more we forge this invisible pact to sequester men at either extreme of the Kinsey spectrum, the more that interesting middle-ground of male sexuality remains unvoiced and the more tension it creates. We all know it's a lie. We've all been there. When two men feel as comfortable getting off with one another as women do on reality shows like Geordie Shore, I'll join the cheerleaders for the new sexual fluidity. In the meantime, let's keep what people say to pollsters in context of the prevailing climate and take it with a pinch of social salt, shall we?

"

THERE IS

NO REASON TO SUGGEST YOUNG MEN'S **SEXUALITY** IS ANY LESS **CURIOUSLY** KINSEY-ISH THAN YOUNG WOMEN'S, YET STILL IT FEELS IT, PUBLICALLY



Matt Cain @MattCainWriter

VIDAL'S THIRD NOVEL CAUSED A SIX YEAR BAN OF ALL HIS WORKS IN THE NEW YORK TIMES FOLLOWING THE SCANDAL THAT EMERGED UPON ITS RELEASE. NOW, IT STANDS AS A LANDMARK OF THE GAY EXPERIENCE.

GORE VIDAL'S THE CITY AND THE PILLAR

ONE OF THE most radical gav novels of all time, The City and the Pillar was published in 1948 when its author Gore Vidal was just 22 and a celebrated young writer. It shocked society, failed to secure a single review in a major American newspaper, and The New York Times blacklisted all Vidal's books for the next six years.

But it's a magnificent novel. Yes, it's candid about gay lifestyles and sexual activity, but it's also beautifully and simply written, often entertaining and sometimes desperately sad.

It tells the story of Jim Willard, a handsome high school tennis champion who falls in love with his equally athletic but very straight friend Bob Ford. After the two of them have sex one weekend at a cabin in the woods, Bob leaves Virginia to join the navy and doesn't answer Jim's letters. Jim sets out to find him, over the next ten years travelling around the US and Mexico, working as a sailor, a tennis coach and in the army.

At first Jim is repelled by what he sees as his 'monstrous' sexuality and tries to have sex with a woman. When he meets other gay men he's disgusted by their effeminacy. rejecting them as 'fags' and 'fairies'. But he's soon lured into the gay underworld and has affairs with a closeted movie star and an insecure novelist before starting to sleep around. Although he can't escape the memory of his 'perfect masculine idyll' with

Bob, even when it emerges that Bob's married a woman.

Re-reading the novel now, it feels ahead of its time and full of insight about what we now understand to be 'gay shame'. But the problem is I don't think Gore Vidal ever conquered his own shame about being gay. He repeatedly refused to come out and distanced himself from the gay movement, saying he believed in gay sexual acts but thought everyone was bisexual.

When I met him in 2000 I found him cold towards me as a gay man. We discussed his highschool affair with the athletic Jimmie Trimble, the inspiration for The City and the Pillar, but I felt he was clinging onto the idealised memory of two innocent boys falling in love. For 53 years he

shared his life with Howard Austen but only as a 'companion', preferring to have sex with straight-acting 'trade'. When he told me he didn't believe in combining sex and love in the same experience, I thought of Jim Willard's description of gay relationships as 'ludicrous and unnatural' and couldn't help thinking Vidal himself must share this belief.

But none of this should detract from

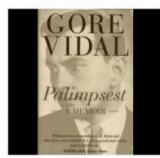


the brilliance of his stellar novel. And its achievements should always be seen in context; for the first time the novel humanised gay men, showed the world we weren't all different and refused to punish its protagonist by killing him off at the end. When I think about the time I spent with its unpleasant, combative author, this is what I try to remember.

THREE OTHER KEY MOMENTS IN GORE VIDAL'S CAREER



Myra Breckinridge is the best known of his novels, a satire on attitudes towards gender with a transsexual heroine.



Palimpsest is a memoir documenting Vidal's high-school affair with Jimmie Trimble, who the author called the love of his life.



Vidal also starred opposite Tim Robbins in Bob Roberts, the high-point of his parallel career as an actor.

IN SOME WAYS MEDITATION HAS BEEN A FOUNDATION FOR MY LIFE. IT'S **SOMETHING THAT'S MADE** MY LIFE VERY CALM AND PEACEFUL, A WAY TO DEAL WITH THE STRESS.

IN THE 60S AND 70S, GAY MEN WERE VERY KEEN TO HELP EACH OTHER BECAUSE IT WAS LIKE A SECRET CLUB. THAT'S PROBABLY WHY MY BUSINESS APPEARED: BECAUSE THERE WAS A NEED FOR IT.

I choose to be happy, regardless of what anybody else around me is doing - whereas a lot of people wallow in their self misery.

I'm a great believer in letting negative things go: comparing and competing, blame, anger, worry, fear, guilt, regrets they're all pointless things.

I think you can be happy wherever you are: you don't have to have silk cushions to be happy, you don't have to have the latest must-have celebrity home furnishing item.

In 1974, when I formed our company with David A'lee, it was the very first gay building company in Britain. The Financial Times recently credited us as being probably the real founders of the Pink Pound.

TRUE STRENGTH DOESN'T COME FROM WHAT YOU CAN DO , IT COMES FROM OVERCOMING THE THINGS YOU ONCE THOUGHT YOU COULDN'T DO. ONCE YOU'VE GOT THAT INNER STRENGTH YOU CAN DO ALMOST ANYTHING IN LIFE.

THE BEST ADVICE I'VE EVER BEEN GIVEN? NEVER SURRENDER THE **CERTAINTY OF WHO YOU** ARE TO THE OPINION OF SOMEONE ELSE.

We're seeing the demise of communication. When we really look into the eyes of a stranger, we can usually see a reflection of our own inner, higher state. But we rarely do that because we're scared to.

MY HAPPINESS IS A CHOICE THAT I CAN MAKE REGARDLESS OF WHAT THE PEOPLE AROUND ME ARE DOING OR SAYING.

I want to inspire people, to have them look at me and say 'because of you I didn't give up'.

Happiness is a choice, not a result. It can only come from you.



Jain Dale

At the end of August my partner, John, and I marked our twentieth anniversary together. In many ways this is unremarkable. Virtually every male couple I know are in very long-term relationships – even friends of mine who are in their twenties or thirties seem to be destined to be 'togethah forevah'. Why is this notable? Simple. Because even nowadays there is this perception that gay men are incapable of maintaining long-term relationships and that they are more interested in one night stands and a life of bed-hopping than establishing deep roots with another person.

I've never thought gay men (or women, for that matter) are any more hedonistic than their straight counterparts. I think gay men got a reputation for shagging anything that moves because of the ease of access to sex if you wanted it. But as we see from the success of sites like Ashley Madison, PlentyOfFish, Tinder and countless others, straight men and women now have exactly the same opportunities.

Every relationship is different and there is no real secret which can explain why some endure and others come to grief after a relatively short time. Some relationships thrive on volatility, others on consensus. Some need an injection of excitement every now and then, others thrive on routine. There's no handbook you can read on how to ensure your relationship endures, but there is one word which I'd say is vital to any long-lasting partnership, and that's 'compromise'.

It's very rare that two people share identical interests or identical personalities. Most of the time one part of the duo is interested in something that the other just can't understand or abide. One might be more career-minded than the other. There will always be massive differences. The art is to navigate them without falling out, and the way to do that is compromise. It's not a word which tends to feature in my everyday lexicon. I'm a black and white person. Margaret Thatcher once

WHAT'S THE SECRET TO A LONG-LASTING RELATIONSHIP?

abandoning all beliefs, principles and values." Well, she had a point in the political world, but in the world of relationships she's wrong. My partner is placid. I'm volatile. Apart from dogs and cars, we have few interests in common. I like travel. He's a home boy. I love sport. He hates all sports. He collects glass.

said: "consensus seems to be the process of

I collect speeding tickets. We have entirely different tastes in music and film. I like going to the cinema. He prefers to watch a DVD at home. I am a West Ham season ticket holder. He precedes every mention of the word 'football' with the word 'fucking'. I could go on. At length.

And yet it works. We rarely have an argument. In twenty years together we've never had a door slamming, screaming row, and for anyone who knows me, they'll no doubt raise an eyebrow at that. But it happens to be true. Somehow, it works. Just as I am sure that at times I drive John to distraction

with some of the things I do or say, I too sometimes bite my tongue or don't say what I am thinking. The trouble is that he knows me too well, and knows exactly what I am thinking, sometimes before I think it!

But that's what I mean about compromise. If one person in the relationship is intent on always getting their own way, the other one is effectively acting as a doormat. It's almost abusive. No relationship like that can survive in the long-term. At least, I don't think it can, and even if it does, why would anyone want

John and I have a straight friend who appears to row with his girlfriend most days. Every other day she splits up with him. Once a week she even packs his clothes into a suitcase. But then they kiss and make up. I couldn't be in a relationship like that, but each to their own. What works for one couple doesn't work for another. In twenty years I haven't once seriously considered splitting up and I am as sure as I can be that John hasn't either. After all, who would get



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L.A. ON A PLATE

LOS ANGELES BOASTS SOME OF THE BEST RESTAURANTS In the united states, if not the world. And that's Just the start of their culinary prowess...



ulinary magazine *Bon Appetit* recently published its prestigious list of America's Best New Restaurants 2015, and Los Angeles, with its dynamic dining scene, took 2nd and 3rd place with Gjusta and Petit Trois respectively showing its significant presence on the national food scene.

Located in the neighbourhood of Venice, Gjusta is a little taste of everything; it's a juice bar, bakery, deli, pizzeria, smokehouse and coffee shop, but its all-encompassing nature doesn't take a toll on quality. Although its menu has a 'to-go' feel – sandwiches, salads, pastries, coffees – the place is spacious, and there are plenty of white marble counter tops where you can perch right in front of where the food is prepared. *gjusta.com*

On Melrose Avenue sits Petit Trois, an intimate restaurant for French dishes and drinks. It promises four star precision placed on some of our most well-known and comforting dishes; effectively, a top class bistro. Intimate and homey, it's a little taste of Parisian delight in the Californian sunshine. Omelettes, steaks and escargot are all here, with an impressive array of French wines, cocktails and specialist liqueurs. *petittrois.com*

On top of that, there are plenty of start-ups that could well be vying



for top place in the Bon Appetit list come 2016, with dozens of new restaurants slated to open in the coming months.

Little Sister is the latest venture from culinary-scene name Tin Vuong, who is bringing his ever-popular Asian concept from Manhattan Beach to downtown L.A. Likewise the noted Mexican chef Diego Hernandez, who already has one of the World's 50 Best Restaurants in his home country, is bringing his concept to L.A. in new restaurant +52. There's also buzz around Little Pine, an organic vegan bistro being opened by dance music producer/DJ Moby in the historically gay-friendly neighbourhood of Silver Lake.

Keep an eye out for the dineL.A. Restaurant Week, organised semi-annually by the L.A. Tourism Board as a 14 day dining event to showcase the city as a premier dining destination. Every year more than 300 restaurants offer prix-fixe menus from cozy farm-to-table spots to five-star restaurants in neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles. Building on its success, last year dineL.A. launched its first-ever Happy Hour Week, a small-plates & cocktail event celebrating local chefs and bartenders. Check out the website below for the latest dineL.A. updates and events.



Meet with a beautiful crowd from all over the world and experience Arosa Ski at its best!

The Gay Ski Week attracts gays and lesbians from more than 30 countries, and is popular both with non-skiers, beginners and advanced skiers. The event boasts gay-friendly hotels, B&B's and holiday apartments. We offer 225 km of fantastic ski and snowboard runs to suit all levels, plus cultural events, concerts and amazing theme parties. There will also be fine dining, apres-ski, ice-skating, wellness spa and sunbathing. - Allegra in Arosa!



















THE CAPITAL OF MASSACHUSETTS AND THE HEART OF NEW ENGLAND, BOSTON IS A BUZZ OF MODERNITY IN ONE OF AMERICA'S OLDEST CITIES. MORDES: MORDES HER MELLY

f you fancy an east coast experience but have already done New York, look no further than Boston – one of the oldest cities in America, and one which played a crucial role in the country's battle for independence. You can learn all about it on the city's Freedom Trail; a 2.5 mile self guided walking tour that recalls the city's revolutionary history, from the Massachusetts State House, to the site of the 1770 Boston Massacre to the USS Constitution.

The perfect spot to stay is at the Revere Hotel on Boston Common (reverehotel.com), in the heart of the city. Its rooftop pool and bar is in a fantastic location to lounge in the daytime overlooking the action, and is relaxed and unpretentious. Their Emerald Lounge is a bar-club with a Wizard of Oz theme which hosts DJs on week nights. Luxurious, yet affordable, it's a perfect mix between a city stop off and somewhere you can spend a bit more time treating yourself.

Boston Common is bordered by beautiful brownstones, including the building which houses the original *Cheers* bar, a must visit for fans of the show, where you can have a drink at the famous watering hole, and visit the upstairs gift store for merchandise. Also be sure to check out The Thinking Cup which is on the edge of the

Common too, and one of the city's best coffee shops with impeccable pastries.

There are several expensive steakhouses in this vicinity, but for the true Boston culinary experience walk the 15 minutes up to North End, where seemingly residential streets are lined with top notch restaurants, which pay tribute to international cuisine while all incorporating the vast amounts of seafood the Massachusetts coast enjoys. The clam chowder is an absolute must! Quincy Market is also in this vicinity, and hosts some of the city's best shops.

Even if you're not a sports fan, you won't regret a visit to Fenway Park stadium, for the original American baseball experience. It's affordable and the atmosphere is electric.

The gay scene in general is scattered across the city, but the South End and Tremont Street area is the traditional gay neighbourhood. Club Cafe is probably the most popular video bar, for a mixed crowd and dancing; Jacque's Cabaret is the premiere drag venue; and The Alley is a bear bar open to all, tucked away in the city centre with a very relaxed feel. Do check in advance which nights are the best for these venues, as they can be quiet during the week, or hosting a themed night.

Harvard University in Cambridge,

Virgin Atlantic flies to Boston daily from London Heatbrow. virgin-atlantic.com which is only a few subway stops away, is definitely worth a visit. You can mix with scholars and visit the world famous Mr Bartley's burger place, where dishes are named after celebrity visitors and current news names. Also, history buffs may enjoy a visit to the JFK Presidential Library & Museum which houses all the personal belongings of the city's famous President.

With the shopping and theatre of New York, and all the history of Philadelphia or D.C, Boston is a perfect mix of all you could want from an east coast visit, and crucially, sits as the gateway to the beautiful surrounds of Cape Cod, where you can holiday in the elegant Martha's Vineyard, or the gay mecca Provincetown – all just a boat ridze away.





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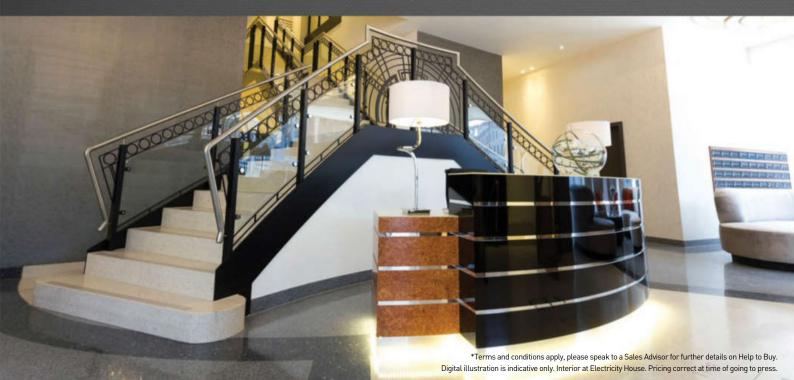
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These apartments have come with plenty of features, including vaulted ceilings



and large windows which work to create an abundance of natural light and space. The living space is open plan to a spacious fully fitted modern kitchen with integrated appliances. The master bedroom has built in wardrobes, a beautiful ensuite with a double shower and free standing oval bath, and access to a second private terrace offering

intimate views over London's skyline.

The apartments are mere moments from the best of London, including Covent Garden and Leicester Square, as well as all the convenient transport links these places offer.

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One property currently for sale is the stunning Golfe 37. Built in 2013, overlooking the second hole of the premier South Golf Course, Golfe 37 boasts one of the best vistas on the resort, as well as one of the most convenient locations. The villa has floor-to-ceiling windows spanning the top two floors, a breath-taking entertaining space as well as an infinity pool, a triple garage, a games room, gym, fully equipped home cinema and a wine cellar.

Golfe 37 is for sale with a guide of €6 million. For more information visit quintadolago.com or call +351 910014622.

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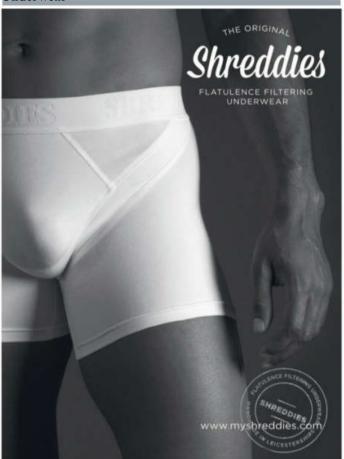




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HOW GAY IS

SHE'S A POP STAR WITH A STRONG TRACK RECORD ON SATURDAY NIGHT TALENT SHOWS, HAVING JUDGED ON STRICTLY AND BRITAIN'S GOT TALENT, BUT IS ALESHA READY FOR THE **HOW GAY CHALLENGE?**



HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH FOR A HAIRCUT?

Oh my goodness. Well, my hairdresser charges me a fortune! It depends what you're getting done. I don't know, £50, £60? The fees I pay my hairdresser are outrageous.

4/5 IF YOU FEEL SOMETHING IS OUTRAGEOUSLY PRICED BUT STILL PAY FOR IT, YOU'RE DOING IT RIGHT.

WOULD YOU RATHER RUN OUT OF UNDERWEAR OR MOISTURISER?

I'd rather run out of moisturiser, 100%. The reason being my skin is pretty good, so I reckon my skin could cope quite well without moisturiser. But I would not be able to cope at all without underwear.

5/5 SKIN THAT DOESN'T NEED MOISTURISER? THE DEFINITION OF FLAWLESS.

YOU WERE ONCE THE OPENING ACT FOR ENRIQUE IGLESIAS. JUST HOW BEAUTIFUL IS HE IN REAL LIFE?

He was lovely actually! He was really nice. I mean, we didn't get to spend that much time with him to be honest, but when we did cross paths, in the corridors, he was really friendly. 3/5 SAME. EXCEPT WE ONLY PASSED HIM BECAUSE WE WERE BEING DRAGGED OUT BY SECURITY. SO NICE THOUGH.

WHICH OF THESE ANNOYS YOU MOST?

- A When he never wash up
- B When he never clean up

C When he never brush up

Clean up. If he didn't clean up that would annoy me. I like a clean house, I'm a bit of a clean freak, and I don't feel relaxed if my house isn't tidy, so he has to clean up for sure. I want someone who can do it all.

3/5 DON'T WE ALL ALESHA, DON'T WE ALL.

IF YOU WERE TO BRING A SQUAD OF INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN ON STAGE WITH YOU, A LA TAYLOR SWIFT, WHO WOULD THAT INCLUDE?

Oprah Winfrey, because she's just a goddess and the Queen of the World. Alicia Keys, because I think she is just incredible, and really cares about good causes around the world as well. Beyoncé, because she's just another queen, isn't she? My mum, she's pretty cool. And Michelle Obama. What would we sing? One (the U2 song) - that's a good song, isn't it?

4/5 THAT LINE UP IS LITERALLY ICONIC, BUT WE WERE HOPING THEY MIGHT TACKLE 'SO-SO-SO-SCANDALOUS'.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE DAD BOD PHENOMENON?

What's that? (Attitude explains) Where he's just put on a few pounds? Umm. I like a six pack myself! That's part of my more shallow side, I would say. I definitely like a six pack. I like those abs to be seen. It tells me that a man looks after himself and cares about himself. I don't have to have a six pack: one rule for me

and one rule for him.

5/5 SHALLOW? ONE RULE FOR YOU AND ANOTHER FOR HIM? OH GIRL, YOU ARE ONE OF US!

WHAT'S THE GAYEST THING YOU'VE EVER DONE:

- A Hosted Mister World 2010?
- **B** Won Strictly Come Dancing?
- C Becoming Creative Director of gym chain LA

I'd say winning Strictly Come Dancing, definitely. Does performing at Manchester Pride count? 3/5 ONLY IN A HAZEL DEAN KIND OF WAY, KEEP PLAYING THE STRICTLY CARD.

HAVE YOU EVER USED GRINDR?

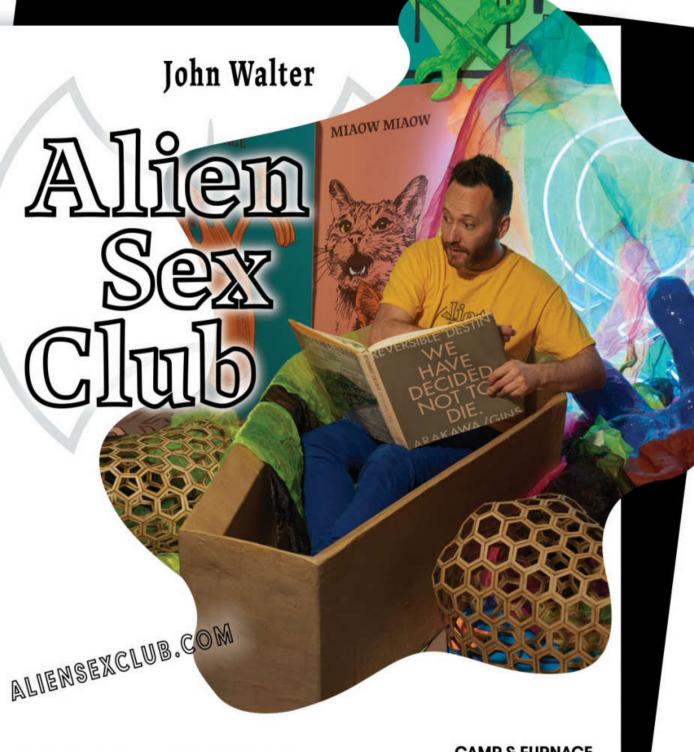
No, I haven't! Do you know what, now you've mentioned it, I probably will try it when I'm with my friends one night, just for a laugh, so I can say I've tried it. I'll do that.

4/5 THIS IS WHAT GAY INDOCTRINATION CONSERVATIVES WORRY ABOUT, ISN'T IT?

ALESHA APPRECIATES A STRONG SQUAD, A GOOD PUBLICITY STUNT, AND A MAN WITH AN UNATTAINABLE BODY. SHE ALSO KNOWS HOW TO MAINTAIN HER BEAUTY AND FLAUNT WHAT GOD GAVE HER. ALESHA, CONSIDER YOURSELF ONE OF THE FAMILY.

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